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A New Play by Laurence Housman

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EARLY in the week there was a rumour that the Inland Revenue Authorities intended to be more considerate in their methods of collecting income tax, but we now learn that even this item of Christmas cheer has been officially contradicted. Searching for other seasonable news we find that Hungary has declared a moratorium; that there have been several spectacular murders; that the Vatican Library has collapsed; that the great Spanish lottery is a fiasco, the State having won the first prize; that the Basle Committee is finding its task even more difficult than had been expected; that the Headmasters of Eton and Harrow have stated that our public school education is on entirely wrong lines; that the Revenue is heavily down as compared with last year, and that the Licensing Commission is likely to produce at least three conflicting reports.

* * *

Christmas is being celebrated in Manchuria by a drive of the Japanese forces against the bandits and by another operation which is expected to turn the Chinese out of Chinchow. The weather is severe (it is 20 degrees below zero, we are told), but the Japanese troops are reported to be in high spirits. That we can quite understand, for neither the bandits, though they are said to number 30,000, nor Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang's regulars need give them much trouble. The Japanese Government, too—or at least the military party who are in the ascendant—can rejoice in their victory over the League of Nations, and in the support they have received from diplomats and journalists in Europe. Some of this support comes from people who never disguise their sympathy for the policy of the big stick. But there are papers and publicists, in England especially, whose attitude in this conflict between aggressive militarism and the principles of the Covenant can only be described as canting hypocrisy American public opinion is not quite so indifferent to the seriousness of the issues in the Far East, and Dr Wellington Koo has thought it worth while to appeal to the United States to uphold the sanctity of the Nine Power Treaty. We hope it will be worth while. The American representative at the meetings of the League Council did not offer much encouragement; but there are now slight signs of stiffening at Washington.

* * *

"Call no man happy till he is dead," said the old Greek. But in these days we may call a country at least relatively happy which is not threatened with bankruptcy or revolution and which is full of confidence in its future. The Government and the people of Soviet Russia have their troubles, indeed, and they may pitch their hopes a trifle too high; but they have got a going concern, and good reason to believe it will

go a great deal farther. They are now talking of their second Five Year Plan. The present plan, as they know, will not show a 100 per cent. success in every way. In some departments results have been as good as, or even better than, were anticipated. But there are weak spots and problems to be solved—particularly the increase of transport, the training of managers and technicians, the improvement of the quality of many products. All these things, however, are being attended to, and we see no signs of that collapse which the anti-Bolsheviks are (or perhaps we should say were) so sure of. It is probable that the *tempo* of the second Plan will not be quite so furious, for experience has shown that it is possible to go too fast, and, moreover, the effects of the world slump are bound to be felt in Russian trade and industry. But that there will be immense developments in the next few years, we do not doubt. And amongst them is promised a substantial rise in the standard of living of the people.

* * *

There is some little flutter in Paris over the draft of the Franco-Soviet treaty which has just been published in the newspapers. It is a pact of non-aggression and neutrality—friendship would be too strong a word. It was initialled last August by M. Berthelot and M. Dovgalevsky; but it has not yet been passed by the French Cabinet, and its signature has several conditions precedent attached to it. One of these is that there must be a similar treaty between the U.S.S.R. and Poland, while the Poles add a further complication by insisting on a Russo-Rumanian pact. There is a good deal of criticism of the project by the Right in France; "Pertinax" in the *Echo de Paris* denounces the innocuous thing as immoral, which reminds one of the chorus of protest raised in Christendom when warring Christain monarchs first made alliances with the infidel Turk. The Soviet Government, with the picture of French diplomacy before their eyes, may smile at this assumption of virtue. But whether they, on their part, are prepared to acquiesce finally in the present Polish frontier, or to forgo their claim to Bessarabia, seems doubtful. The fact, however, that the project has got as far as it has is a sign that common sense still haunts this mad world.

* * *

The Australian Labour Government has suffered a defeat almost as thorough as befell our own this autumn. There are, indeed, very close resemblances. In both cases the election issue arose out of a financial crisis; and in both the leadership of the anti-Labour forces was in the hands of a prominent seceder from the ranks of Labour. The Opposition in Australia took Mr. Lyons and Mr. Fenton to its bosom as our Tories took Mr. MacDonald and Lord Snowden. But there are differences as well as resemblances; for in Australia Mr. Lang broke away to the Left as well as Mr. Lyons to the Right, and Mr. Lang's following, unlike our Mr. Maxton's, has gained seats. It has, incidentally, ousted Mr. Theodore, who has succeeded in getting himself cordially hated by almost everyone. Mr. Lyons, who will presumably be Prime Minister, has been a Labour man; but, like our Mr. Thomas, he has never been a Socialist. He will probably be a good deal happier than Mr. MacDonald as the leader of his former opponents. Mr. Scullin and the official Labour Party are unenviably placed; for Mr. Lang will now be more formidable than ever, and may easily wrest the control of the party from them. Nor will Mr. Scullin find it easy to oppose Mr. Lyons; for he was, in effect, following for the most part Mr. Lyons' policy. In relation to the outside world the change of Government is not likely to make much difference; Australia under Mr. Scullin has done most of the things the Niemeyer Report told it to do, and Mr. Lyons cannot do much more.

* * *

The wheat quota continues to give trouble. The millers are still up in arms against it, and actively pushing a rival scheme of their own. They want, apparently, a levy on every sack of flour, and the payment to the farmers of a subsidy on wheat out of the proceeds, with a duty on imported flour at a higher rate than the home levy. At present the Government are sticking to their own scheme; but there has been a constant coming and going of deputations at the Ministry of Agriculture during the past week, and the quota plan cannot yet be regarded as in its final shape. As far as the Empire quota is concerned, Mr. Bennett's statement that this was to be 70 per cent., in addition to 15 per cent. for the home growers, has now been officially contradicted, as we held last week it was bound to be. Apparently, Mr. Bennett mistook a quota of 70 per cent. including the home supply for one exclusive of it. It would, of course, have been sheerly ridiculous to tie this country down, irrespective of the seasons, to use only 15 per cent. of foreign wheat. Even a limitation to 30 per cent. is likely to have serious consequences, both on prices and on our trade with the Argentine, which is one of our best markets. In 1928 just over half our wheat imports came from the Empire. But 1928 was a quite abnormal year, and in both 1929 and 1930 over 60 per cent. came from foreign countries.

* * *

The wheel has come full circle with the placing of tariff duties on cotton goods; for was it not the cotton lords of Lancashire that were the protagonists of the movement which brought Great Britain over to Free Trade? But now the chief complaint from the cotton centres seems to be that protection is not being applied over a wide enough field, and especially that cotton yarns have been left outside the scope of Mr. Runciman's new duties. In general, the new order issued last week-end contained no surprises, for it was clear in advance that the Government did not mean to yield to the demand for the inclusion of iron and steel. It is doubtless true that, in this case as well, there was some evidence of abnormal imports—and no wonder! For a high duty on imports of iron and steel into this country is likely to be a serious matter for continental producers, with their large surplus of producing capacity. There is, however, little doubt that the Government will tax iron and steel imports in due course, though they can hardly apply to them either a flat-rate duty, or one nearly as high as the designedly prohibitive duties at present being imposed. What remains to be seen is whether advantage will be taken of the opportunity to force the long overdue reorganisation of the trade upon the manufacturers.

The cotton industry's new scheme for buying up and putting out of action redundant factories and plant in all sections of the trade is now under consideration by all the bodies of employers concerned. The proposal is that a levy should be put on existing machinery and the proceeds used to eliminate the surplus. It is suggested that this should be done on a compulsory basis, through a statutory board of trustees to be set up by Act of Parliament, for there would clearly be no hope, in face of the large number of separate employers and the sharp divergences of opinion among them, of getting effective action on voluntary lines. The capital needed for buying up plant would be borrowed, and the levy applied to payment of interest and sinking fund on the loan. Obviously this plan has something in its favour. But its cost will add to the already top-heavy overhead charges of the industry; and it is certainly no substitute for positive measures of financial and economic reorganisation designed to lower production costs. Buying up redundant plant—and no one doubts that a good fifth of Lancashire's plant is redundant—may be a necessary part of reorganisation. The danger is that the cotton trade, if it does accept this scheme after rejecting so many, will rest satisfied with it and be even more reluctant to resort to drastic measures.

* * *

The Ministry of Labour has published, in the current *Gazette*, an estimate of the effects of the changes in the unemployment insurance scheme on the numbers registered at the Employment Exchanges. During the five weeks ended November 23rd the numbers registered as unemployed fell by nearly 123,000. The Ministry's estimate is that of this drop 68,000 was due to increased employment, and 55,000 to the dropping of registration by persons who had not found work, but had been disqualified for receipt of benefit. Of these 55,000 it is estimated that all but 4,000 were women. In general, disallowance of benefit has little effect on the figures of registration in the case of persons who remain under the health insurance scheme, as they can get their health insurance cards franked at the Exchanges as long as they remain on the books. These figures do not show the effects of the "means test," which had not been in operation long enough to affect them when the estimate was made. They reflect chiefly the working of the new regulations under the Anomalies Act. The "means test," with the wholesale weeding-out of women applicants which has followed its introduction in November, is bound to have a further effect on the figures.

* * *

Hostility to the working of the "means test" up and down the country is by no means confined to Labour representatives. The complaints are mainly of two kinds—first, that such rules as have been laid down for applying the test compel the Committees to inflict unwarrantable hardships, and secondly that the rules do nothing to secure uniformity of administration. In some areas, particularly in Lancashire, there is great reluctance on the part of the local authorities to go on working the scheme, and one or two have already demanded that their duties shall be taken over by a Commissioner. Undoubtedly the members of Public Assistance Committees are finding the task thrust upon them both uncongenial and thankless; for they have to work the scheme within the regulations, and there is keen resentment—and even some rioting—in working-class districts where relief has to be refused to people who are found to have some small amount of savings put away. There is also trouble over the very high proportion of women applicants who are being disqualified on the ground that their relatives ought to keep them. How much the taxpayers of the country are going to be saved we cannot yet tell. In Manchester it is estimated that more than a third of the applicants will be entirely deprived of benefit, while about twenty per cent. will get a reduced amount. But there are other areas where the Committees are more generous, and there has, of course, to be taken into account the large increase in the cost of administering the test.

* * *

Restored, as we hope, to his old vigour, Mr. Lloyd George is on his way home from Ceylon. That enchanting island

> Where every prospect pleases
> And only man is vile

did not, apparently, greatly appeal to him; and he is returning to an island where prospects are gloomy, and where politicians have their full share of villainy to contend with. His activities on his arrival are awaited with an eagerness that does full justice to his Parliamentary reputation, if it does not actually flatter it. The Tariffists are said to be waiting, as the Russians waited in the Crimea, for the advent of Generals Janvier and Février; and it is highly probable that when January comes we shall find Mr. Lloyd George digging in, and consolidating his position, on the hard-pressed Free Trade front. Where will Samuel be then? where Runciman? where Lord Snowden of Ickornshaw? The deepening air of crisis in which we move may cause the Die-hards in Parliament to stay their hand; but if it does not, they will present Mr. Lloyd George with an opportunity he has long awaited.

* * *

In an admirable letter published in the *Times* (Dec. 22nd) a large group of representative publishers and prominent men of letters expressed their regret and alarm at the change of policy proposed by the B.B.C. As persons especially interested in the production of books they protested against the decision to exclude reviews of novels from broadcast talks. And as responsible persons conscious of the danger of a censorship of criticism they plead for a continuance of the established policy of the B.B.C. The *Times* itself, though with some initial hesitation and many qualifying phrases, eventually came down on the right side when it said: "The right course for the B.B.C. is not to try to be vague, woolly or safe, but to continue its courageous policy of expressing all the more important currents of thought with candour and impartiality." The principle could not be better stated. We are waiting to know whether the policy of the B.B.C. in the future is really to be that attributed to it, apparently with official sanction, by a Sunday paper. Will it be found possible to continue talks at all if nothing is ever to be said that might "offend the susceptibilities of a maiden aunt or a child"?

THE ECONOMICS OF GLUT

MR. H. G. WELLS ends his new book, *What Are We to do With Our Lives?* with the remark that "a time will come when men will sit with history before them or with some old newspaper before them and ask incredulously: 'Was there ever such a world?'" Perhaps that time, when our present muddle will seem too fantastic ever to have existed, will come much sooner than we now dare to hope. For capitalism has done its work. It has solved the problem of production. Where unaided nature produced an ear of corn, we produce a thousand; machinery now accomplishes with a dozen hands what a thousand could not accomplish in the past. How long shall we be in solving the problem of distribution as we have solved that of production? Is it too optimistic to hope that in a century from now we shall have decided to use the goods we can produce so abundantly for the equal satisfaction of human needs?

Our extraordinary technical success is disguised to-day by our no less extraordinary failure to make sane use of it. We have succeeded beyond the wildest dreams of the Utopians in minimising the amount of necessary labour. The result is the very thing we have aimed at—leisure, or, as we call it, unemployment. So grotesquely have we failed in the task of distribution and so tragically have we neglected the arts of living—in distinction from the art of making a living—that this prodigious addition to the leisure of mankind is considered a monstrous evil, a "disease" to be cured by setting men to work. And in present conditions a monstrous evil it is. Yet unemployment is the ripe fruit of all the inventions of the last century, the object and the justification of every application of science to industry and agriculture. We are even on the way to removing the obstacle which economists used to think insuperable. Population, they thought, would always increase faster than production, so that we were doomed to eternal poverty. To-day that devil, too, is in chains. Civilised peoples produce faster than they propagate. We have escaped the old dilemma of the niggardliness of nature and the fecundity of man.

We can imagine the economist of a century ago hobnobbing with Mr. Wells's Utopian observer. They would agree that the unbelievable thing about the twentieth century was that, having solved the infinitely complex technical problems of production, we yet continued to throw away all the benefits of our own cleverness by the fantastic muddle of our social and national organisation. How could there ever be a time when men habitually destroyed the goods they produced because they would not permit those who wanted them to have the purchasing power to pay for them? How could we continue to allow exchange to depend on the distribution of a metal which creditor nations could lock up, with the result of impoverishing both themselves and their debtors? Is it possible, they would say, that the United States should really have preferred the payment (or the title to the payment) of sums of money to the actual benefits of giving and receiving goods? And what would they say of Brazil solemnly taking thousands of bags of coffee into a secluded valley and burning them or, as an alternative, pressing them into briquettes as engine fuel, to cotton growers ploughing their crops into the soil, to rubber planters rejoicing in the discovery of a new pest?

The very oddest spectacle of all is presented by the economists, the doctors whom we are supposed to consult for guidance in these complex matters. The more orthodox of them—especially those who most fully recognise the folly of economic nationalism—seem to have turned away from any fruitful effort to consider the problem of this abundance. They have never tackled the economics of glut. Their economic theory remains rooted in the old assumptions of the niggardliness of nature and the competitive nature of man. But is man necessarily competitive once there is enough to go round? Their laws of supply and demand are simple irrelevances in a world of over-production. Some of the worthiest and ablest of them, judged as abstract thinkers, have returned to the completely *laisser faire* view of a century ago. Their remedy is to leave the economic system alone; to let prices and values fall to rock bottom; to burn the surplus stocks of goods and then wait for the emergence of a new price-level. Once it has been found, private profits, they argue, will again be made and the normal round of demand and supply, of slump and boom, of crisis and over-investment, over-work and unemployment, will begin once again.

That is, of course, one possibility. It entails a plunge into incredible depths of want in order to capture an elusive, perhaps a purely imaginary, "equilibrium." That is why most nations are driven to the only less extreme folly of over-taxing their citizens in order to construct a tariff wall of segregation. For, in the last resort, the English trader will always go down before the Pole, the Pole before the Japanese, the Japanese before the Chinese, until, presumably, the world equilibrium is reached at the stage of a Chinaman with a bowl of rice or an Indian cotton hand in a loincloth.

Deflation and economy are a remedy for bad times if the bad times are due to shortage. If we were in a siege or a famine we should have to tighten our belts and wait for better times. But why, when there is over-production, should we artificially make a shortage? Why not face the necessity for a new economics, the economics of glut?

When the economists do face it they will be forced to one general conclusion, however widely they may differ about its application. They will have to go far beyond their present denunciations of the follies of tariff barriers. They will have to go beyond the point of admitting that a new generation cannot for ever be bound in the fetters of old indebtedness. They will have to agree that the only sane way of using the immense new wealth which modern science and machinery now offer is deliberately to organise its production and its distribution, not according to a theory of marginal profits, but according to human needs. They can call themselves Socialists or not as they please—it will not matter. They will have innumerable tasks of organisation to explore, and among them they will find it necessary to evolve a new basis of exchange; they may find gold a less suitable basis than a scientific price index. If they abandon their self-imposed task of

explaining why we must all be poor in the midst of plenty and set to work to tell us how to make use of our wealth, they will find themselves, for the first time, speaking with real authority, respected as indispensable experts by common people who need their knowledge. If they do not soon tackle their task all the cranks and the inadequately trained people will do it for them. In which case we shall have another horrible mess.

It will in any case be done, if only because the spectacle of Russia attempting it at a price and by methods which no sane person would think desirable or necessary in the west is too humiliating for countries which have far greater skill and a far superior foundation on which to build. It will certainly be done, because the human animal, stupid and individualistic as he is, will not be bamboozled for ever. When he is driven too hard he will kick, and unless the economists turn their minds to the real problems of organisation they may find the world they theorise about kicked away for a fraud—which would be an excellent thing if there were not a grave danger that the new civilisation which could take its place might be kicked away too. Why not begin by recognising that we are really marvellously well off? Why not begin to study the economics of glut?

BASLE, BERLIN AND WASHINGTON

AT Basle and at Berlin, during the past week, committees have been struggling with the problem of international debts, while from Washington and from Paris the politicians of America and France have been firing broadsides at them. The outlook was bad enough a fortnight ago; but since then events in the United States have made it worse. Paris has hardened at the news from Washington; and the task of the negotiators at Basle and Berlin has become infinitely more difficult now that the United States has committed itself to the mouthing of unrealities as an alternative to getting to grips with the problem. The House of Representatives has passed a resolution ratifying the Hoover moratorium; but it has also declared in round terms against cancellation or reduction of Europe's debts. America, we are told, has no concern with the problem of reparations: Europe must settle its own internal difficulties—and pay.

But how is Europe to pay? Though the Basle report is not out, as we write, there seems to be general agreement that there is no chance of getting any reparations from Germany next year. Indeed, quite apart from reparations, it is clear that Germany would be hard put to it to meet the interest on her commercial borrowings, and could not possibly pay back the short-term money which her creditors are anxious to collect. But, if there is to be no effective transfer of reparations from Germany, will the countries which were to have received them pay the United States? France could doubtless afford to pay, for she has plenty of gold, and was let down relatively lightly when the debt to America was funded. But will she pay? And can we, for our part, possibly pay even if we would? We are already in technical default: we have to find, if we can, a large sum for repayment of the short-term loans we got from America during the crisis; we had by far the hardest bargain of any driven with us in the funding of our debt, and the depreciation of sterling has added immensely to our burden. We cannot pay, and every reasonable American knows we cannot.

What then? In face of America's attitude, the possibility of any big scheme for the cancelling of reparations and war debts, wholly or even in part, has receded far into the background. M. Laval's latest speeches leave no doubt on that point. A real settlement of the debt problem, which might set the world well on the road to economic recovery, seems to be out of the question, for it depends on American co-operation. At best, then, the Conference which meets when the committees at Basle and Berlin have made their reports will not go beyond mere temporary expedients—based on a pretence, which everyone knows to be a pretence, that the difficulties will pass if the world can but tide over the immediate emergency. At best, there will be a fresh standstill agreement on short-term commercial debts, a renewed postponement of annuities (including unconditional annuities) under the Young Plan, and, in relation to America, either a fresh moratorium on European payments, or a mere default without agreement.

It is possible that things will be patched up in some such fashion as this, so as to prevent an immediate collapse of European credit. But this—the best we can hope for—will be the merest patching-up, with the certainty that the trouble will recur in a year's time or less, probably in a still more aggravated form. And even as much as this will not be easily secured. There is no agreement on France's part that commercial payments from Germany shall have priority over reparations; and Germany's Swiss and Dutch creditors are demanding even higher interest than now as a condition of renewing the standstill agreement. British and Scandinavian creditors of Germany, hard pressed for funds, want the agreement to be renewed for no longer than three months; and the Americans, who are prepared to renew for longer, want guaranteed priority over reparations. It is a pretty tangle.

The difficulties are much worse because of the mass of technicalities which surrounds the central core of the problem. France insists that negotiations about reparations must be kept within the framework of the Young Plan, in order to secure for herself the earmarking, if not the actual transfer, of the unconditional annuities. The standstill agreement is, technically, a private matter for the bankers in which the Governments are not concerned; but, in fact, any settlement must include both, because both raise the same difficulty of German payments abroad. Reparations will have to be discussed apart from war debts, though they are obviously bound up together. Short-term private debts are being considered at Berlin; but long-term debts are not, though they both raise the transfer problem in much the same form.

Of course, the key to the entire problem is held in the United States. How are European Governments to pay America over the American tariff an annuity approaching 300,000,000 dollars, and scheduled to rise still higher in a few years' time? How are European private debtors to pay a huge additional sum to a country which is determined to maintain high protection and a surplus of exports? Common sense says there is no way; and even high finance can devise only one—that America should go on, year after year, lending Europe the money, by fresh capital investment in European loans and industries. Common sense replies that this method is not really payment at all, and can only aggravate the problem for the future. But common sense is not in the ascendant just now at Washington or, for that matter, in most of the European capitals. France is frightened, no doubt, and prepared to be more accommodating than she pretends. But the stupidity of the American attitude puts a premium on stupidity in Europe too for no one feels like being generous, or committing himself, while the Americans are in their present mood.

In all the circumstances, if an early collapse in Germany can be prevented, the long-run effect of America's impossibilism, supposing it to be maintained, must be to drive the European countries closer together; for they will all be, in one way or another, defaulters in relation to the United States. Probably they will not hurl at the Americans any collective defiance. They will simply not pay, and will

leave the Americans to find means of making them pay, which obviously cannot be done. Europe will get into the way of writing polite little notes to Washington expressing sorrow that the expected remittances have not arrived; and some day the Americans will get tired of make-believe, and these ludicrous debts will be cancelled after all.

But that depends on Europe holding together, and averting a German crash. Not, of course, that a crash in Germany will make it easier to pay America—quite the reverse. But it would inevitably bring the Americans scurrying back to play a part in settling Europe; for it would threaten their large capital investments and short-term loans in Germany, as well as Washington's claims on the Allied Governments. It would, indeed, in some ways simplify the problem if Germany did collapse; the consequent devastation would at last compel the world to face realities. Amongst other things it would force America to realise that she cannot again do what she did in 1919—play a leading role in Europe, then return to an impossible isolation.

The present attitude of Congress is so fundamentally absurd—and so widely known to be absurd, even in America—that it can hardly be sustained for long. If Europe can tide over for a time, and quietly refrain from paying America, the Americans are bound either positively to accept, or tacitly to acquiesce in, Europe's inability to pay. It is true that this involves that no real settlement of either reparations or inter-Allied debts in Europe can be reached in the meantime; and it may for that reason prevent any funding of even a part of Germany's short-term commercial debts. It will prolong uncertainty, make real reconstruction of European finances impossible, and stand in the way of the recovery of trade. It is not at all a nice prospect; but it looks as if, for the present, there is little hope of anything better, and as if the Conference, when it meets, will have to settle down to making the best of this very bad job.

Meanwhile, Great Britain's difficulties are bound to be considerable; for we have to face not only the cessation of revenue from reparations and the continued lock-up in Germany of our short-term loans, but also the repayment of the huge credits we so foolishly borrowed in the summer in our attempt to keep on the gold standard. We can pay these credits off by the drastic step of exporting practically our entire remaining gold reserve, which is, in effect, all earmarked to meet these loans. The Bank of England has to-day practically no gold of its own; it is all mortgaged. But we shall hardly do this, though we may let more gold go, as we have already let £15,000,000 go to France. What we clearly cannot do is both to pay back these advances and to meet the service of the American debt. Indeed, to attempt this would make our position worse; if we tried to accommodate enough funds in New York, we should only turn the exchanges further against us, and so increase the magnitude of the sum to be paid. Responsible Americans know this well enough. They do not expect us to be able to pay.

Thus the immediate issue in Europe is this. If the Basle committee reports, as it is expected to do, in favour of a moratorium for another two or more years, with the obligation upon Germany to pay at the end of that period, and the French accept that proposal without haggling, then it will be difficult for the German Government to refuse. Everyone will know that reparations are really at an end. But Germany will bitterly resent even formally admitting any further obligations. She will have won the moratorium, but not the principle. If, however, the French contest the inevitable moratorium, then we are likely to see all Germany, led by a combination of Brüning and Hitler, standing for repudiation, once and for all, of any reparations. No one can say what would happen then. Therefore most people who prefer a quiet life will hope for another stop-gap settlement. But in the long run a bold policy of repudiation of all reparations would probably be best for America, Germany, France, and all of us

AIDS TO CHEERFULNESS

THERE are some happily constituted people whom the mere approach of Christmas makes unnaturally cheerful. These are the people with a strong dramatic sense—people who realise that man was sent into the world to play a part, or a repertory of parts—who invariably and honourably rise to the occasion at sound of a Christmas carol sung at the front door or at the offer of a cracker at the end of the Christmas dinner. It makes one cheerful to know that there are such cheerful people in the world. It makes one cheerful to think that once again one may be such a temporarily cheerful person oneself. There must be something wrong with the soul of a man who does not feel his heart beating faster at the moment of pulling a cracker. Cowardice or nerves may bid him refrain—for the bang of a cracker is not without its terrors—but this is no time for trepidation. The high heart counsels to pull and to pull hard—to perform the ancient ritual of explosion and destruction, and out of the resulting chaos to gather the symbols of gaiety and wisdom. It is true that there is nothing unselfish in the act of pulling a cracker. As one grows older, one grows more chivalrous, and is content, and even pleased, to see a child or a woman with the richer half of the cracker, with the cap, the motto and the toy. But the natural human being in us desires victory even in the pulling of a cracker, and, if we were all the same age, we should feel all the elation of egotism satisfied when we happened to have drawn the comeliest cap or the most brilliant motto. On the whole, however, considering the temptations to selfish ambition, the human race behaves fairly well over its crackers. Never have I seen a children's party broken up in confusion as to who should possess the best toy—the whistle, or the doll, or the metal mouse. Seldom have I seen a child cheating in the course of the pull, though I have seen some pocketing toys that were by the rules of war the spoils of others. Even here the child seems to have recognised that it is more in accord with the Christmas spirit to steal quietly than to brawl and bawl till one is given the thing one covets.

I am myself of a jealous disposition and have often been disappointed on seeing others obtaining better Christmas gifts than I. This seldom happened while I was of an age to be content with toys, for then, as a rule, I was given my heart's desire—a stableful of horses. But when I was growing too old for toys, and my elders began to buy books with which to surprise me on Christmas morning, it was sometimes with an effort that I concealed the dejection that I felt on seeing the gift. I am sure *Peter Parley's Annual* was a good book, but it was no good to me. I have no doubt that *Pioneer Life and Frontier Adventure* was an excellent piece of history, but what I wanted was not history, but fiction. I preferred Red Indians to be imaginary characters, whether they were nightmare savages with tomahawks or Christian converts who defended spotless white men and women from the tomahawks of their fellow natives. Facts I liked from the lips of my elders, but not so much in books. There are boys to-day, I am told, who would scarcely thank a parent for a story about Red Indians, and who demand books about engineering and aviation. If anyone had presented me with a book about engineering as a Christmas present during my childhood, it would have remained a bitter memory for life. Theoretically, I hold that any present is a good present; but those who have experienced the tragedy of being given the wrong book remember it with a sharper sadness than they would remember having been given no present at all. Luckily, there was one book in those days that was never the wrong book. I wonder if there was ever any other book that was so universally admired by schoolboys as *The Boys' Own Annual* of the 'eighties and 'nineties of the last century? I have heard most books called "rotten" by somebody, but I never heard a schoolboy of my time speaking ill of

The Boys' Own Annual. Is there any man of fifty living to-day who remembers having been bored by it? Did anybody dislike the school-story of Talbot Baines Reed? They were strangely unlike the stories that are written about school-life in modern days, and, for all I know, they may have been as remote from reality. But we did not ask for pedantic lifelikeness in schoolboys any more than in Red Indians. We got all the lifelikeness we wanted in our coevals. If life was not like Talbot Baines Reed, so much the worse for life. Even to-day I very much doubt whether a book that is not better than what the realists call life is worth reading.

Luckily, *The Boys' Own Annual* was a volume that I was always certain of getting at Christmas. An elderly bachelor, bearded like a Boer, stout and breathless, a shy man whose only conversation was an occasional helpless stammer, used to call round in a four-wheeler every Christmas Eve and stumble into the hall under a load of parcels. Every year we knew that he would come, yet every year we wondered anxiously whether he was coming after all. Never was the sound of the wheels of a cab listened for with sharper ears. Perhaps he would not come. That was a cab, but it had driven past. As he was not a relation, we realised that it was perfectly within his rights not to come. Still he always did come. Little did he realise what apprehensions and agonies in infant breasts were allayed by his ultimate arrival. Little did he realise that, when he had flung his parcels on the table, and lain back in his chair, and begun to stammer his account of the Christmas weather, the younger of his hearers were thinking: "This is no time for general conversation. What's in those parcels?" Out from his pocket there would come a small box, and out of the box a brooch, received with general admiration. Another brooch followed, and then he would take up *The Boys' Own* and reach it to me across the table, addressing me as "Master Y," and with no words added. And a separate gift followed for every member of the family, till at length he cut the cord of the largest of all his parcels and produced his star turn—the mechanical and often musical toy that he always brought for the family in general. His face would brighten with childish pleasure as he wound up the toy and set it on the floor to perform its part. One year it was a lady who seemed to belong to the French Court during one of its least modest periods and who raised a lorgnette to her eye as she sat on a box from which music issued. Another year it was a dog which came out of its kennel and barked. Another year it was a huge pink rose out of which a lovely lady emerged through the top to a melodic accompaniment. Another time it was an excellent goat that walked across the carpet. Yet again it was a juggler performing his tricks while the box on which he stood played a tune. There can have been few finer collections of mechanical and musical toys in the province than the collection that was to be found in our drawing-room. To us they were as wonderful as the great clock at Wells.

Now I contend that the old gentleman was a man who had the sense to realise that all the world's a stage and who played the part of benevolent bachelor to perfection. I admired him then, I confess, largely for selfish reasons. I admire him now, however, as a consummate artist—a master of the art of enjoying making other people enjoy themselves. For one thing, he always gave me the right book. Be careful, O elders, in your beneficences to your juniors, that you do the same. Y. Y.

MILK

GREAT BRITAIN has the highest standard of living in Europe, yet she consumes less milk than any other country in the western world, and correspondingly far more sugar. Both milk and sugar are valuable foods, but in this country they are both chiefly used as flavouring materials. The amount of milk used in England can be taken as a rough guide to the number of cups of tea drunk by the adult population, since, apart from its use for baby feeding and in the making of a negligible amount of butter and cream, it is scarcely regarded as a foodstuff. This fact is very significant, for, although the price of milk is higher in Great Britain than elsewhere in Europe, and is comparable only with that in America, it still remains one of the cheapest real foods available. It seems strange that milk, which is known by all to be essential to life and to the promotion of growth up to the age of one year, should be entirely left out of the adult diet; this in spite of the fact that it is a ready-made food, and, unlike any artificial concoction, perfectly balanced in itself.

No doubt the high price of milk in Great Britain is a factor in the relatively small consumption, but it can only be a minor one, except in so far as it affects the children of the poorest classes. It is the lack of interest in milk as a drink and a food that explains this curious disparity between the consumption in this country and the rest of Europe. That, however, is no justification for the price charged at present. Lest the milk combine rise in wrath against this statement, let it be pointed out that in Sweden, where the standard of living and the wage rate approximate closely to ours, the price of milk is slightly less than half that here. The better and cheaper transport services in this country only make this tremendous difference in price more remarkable. How is one to explain this enormous discrepancy? We are told the farmers are always in a bad way and have difficulty in supplying the country with dairy produce; therefore it would be hardly fair to blame them for the present state of affairs. We are thus left with the retailers, the most powerful of whom is a single combine, highly organised and well equipped. Perhaps some useful commission may inform us who reaps the benefit of the present price?

If it were possible to make milk a really cheap food, it would still be doubtful whether a taste for milk would be cultivated, for the present system of pasteurisation, which is almost universal in the towns, does not render it the more palatable—rather the reverse. The delicious advertisements of rich creamy milk, exhaling the aroma of the countryside, and deliverable at our doors in bottles, are a far cry from the cooked product which actually reaches the public.

Let us analyse the reason for this highly skilled process of pasteurising milk, a process which, one freely admits, is a necessity to-day for all qualities of milk used for human consumption other than tuberculin-tested Grade A milk. The reason is that the milk sold, coming from numerous sources, is bacteriologically impure to a degree dangerous to the health of the community. The organism most feared is the tubercle bacillus, since it is well known that milk is a frequent vehicle for its transmission to the human being. Tuberculous infection comes direct from the cow. Here one may quote figures from Professor Buxton's address at the Conference of Agricultural Organisers. It appears that samples of milk reveal the following percentages of tuberculous contamination. Aberdeen, 5.5; Manchester, 12.6; and London, 7.5; or a general average for England and Scotland of 7.36 per cent. These figures, terrible in themselves, are probably flattering to the quality of the milk, taken all over the country. For the retailers in these enlightened cities must be credited with showing some discrimination against the worst type of farm and the worst samples of milk; these, however, are probably bought up by the smaller dealers or consumed locally.

Infected milk has long been suspected of being one of the chief causes of tuberculous disease of the bones and intestinal canal in man, and while the incidence is decreasing as a result of the still inadequate Public Health measures now in force, it remains unjustifiably high. The same address included the illuminating statement that, in order to eradicate tuberculosis in cattle, no less than half the breeding

and commercial cows in the country would have to be slaughtered and a careful weeding-out process thereafter employed. It was also stated that there are over one million tuberculous cows in England and Wales out of a total cattle population of some six millions. This bald statement of figures requires little imagination or rhetoric to bring home what they really mean, namely a huge potential source of disease. It is true that the death-rate from tuberculosis is rapidly falling in this country, but the reasons are to be sought in the healthier way of living of the population, in the earlier diagnosis of the disease, in its more efficient treatment, and lastly in a possible decline in the virulence of the tubercle organism, which at best cannot be considered of a permanent nature. The disease still remains, however, and incapacitates and kills a section of the population which can rarely be regarded as inherently C_3 in physique.

Tuberculosis is a transmitted disease caused by an infective organism, and there is no reason why it should not be eradicated. The fact that it still remains is a disgrace to our civilisation. Why, then, should one of our most valuable foods be allowed to be a channel of infection? The milk retailers' answer is that it is for this very reason: they thoughtfully pasteurise our milk for us and save us the trouble of boiling it, thereby making its consumption relatively safe, even if not so palatable or nourishing. It is difficult to see the logic or the justice of this practice for a still comparatively wealthy nation. Impoverished Vienna listened to the advice of the late Professor von Pirquet and spent freely on the provision of tuberculin-tested milk at a reasonable price, available in sufficient quantity, at any rate, for babies and young children. In this country there are only some four hundred herds producing Grade A milk, a drop in the ocean of the infected or uncertain variety.

It may seem absurd to attempt to champion the cause of milk drinking in one paragraph while showing its dangers in the unpasteurised state in another, and complaining of impaired flavour and nourishment of cooked milk in a third; but there is no real inconsistency. The London County Council, and various other local councils, now provide milk in their schools for the children, for which the parents are asked to pay the cost price where possible. One school authority conducted an experiment by giving an unselected group of children half a pint of milk daily. At the end of six months the height and weight of these children were compared with the "controls," that is with the rest of the school. The results showed that the children benefited to a marked degree, not only in health and weight, but also in alertness and mental well-being.

While few people, even in England, will dispute the excellence of milk for the young, one never thinks of it for oneself. In Austria a favourite summer beverage consists of ice cold milk served in papier mâché tumblers, and a more delicious beverage cannot be conceived, particularly when drunk in a little open air milk café. There it is considered an adult drink and enjoyed as such. Why not here? Perhaps when the milk companies can sell the public fresh, untreated milk of guaranteed purity at a fair price the interest of the man in the street may be aroused.

Lord Passfield said at a recent medical congress, speaking of venereal diseases, that medical science had gone ahead of administration. That remark might be equally well applied to the question of the national milk supply. The appallingly high incidence of tuberculosis in cattle and the high percentage of tuberculous milk is a national scandal. Pasteurisation is not a remedy; it is merely a palliative and a poor one at that.

Statesmen and newspapers whine verbosely about the falling birth-rate. It would be better to seek a means of preserving the lives and health of the children that are born. The highest death-rate is still amongst those under the age of five, and it is estimated that three thousand children die yearly of tuberculosis acquired from contaminated milk. Why not improve the national health and wipe out a source of disease in one administrative stroke, namely by ridding the country of its tuberculous cattle and enforcing the supply of clean, fresh milk at a price which is fair both to producer and consumer?

A. B.

A CHRISTMAS CONUNDRUM

THE Christmas spirit stands confessed,
So cynics say, a bitter jest
On our alleged democracy:
We sign a cheque or two, and pay
Goodwill lip-service for the day;
Then steel our hearts and go our way,
Complacent in hypocrisy.

"Peace upon earth, good will to men,"
We carol lustily; and then,
The daily strife renewing,
We raise once more our hymns of hate,
And scheme in little things and great
To serve our faction, self, or State,
By other folks' undoing.

What then remains for men of sense?—
To put aside all vain pretence
To charitable feelings?
Or, greatly daring, to decide
That what we praise at Christmastide
Might possibly be used to guide
Our ordinary dealings?

"Peace upon earth, to men goodwill"—
How can we gauge its value till
In practice we've applied it?
Suppose when next a conference met
On wages, armaments, or debt,
We took the plunge, unknown as yet,
And actually tried it?

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

C. G. B. STEVENS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The murder of C. G. B. Stevens has brought back to me many recollections of him. May I add one or two to those that appeared last week in your London Diary? I think they give some picture of his odd irreplaceable quality. I was with him at Wren's, the crammer's, and one long week-end we took a walking tour through Suffolk. We stayed one night at a farmhouse, and after supper sitting with the farmer and his wife Stevens noticed an old and wheezy harmonium. He could never keep his hands off a keyboard, so he at once began to improvise. The farmer rather shyly asked him whether he could play any of the music which their daughter, who had married a teacher and gone to live in London, used to play. Stevie modestly said he would try and was given a Torrey and Alexander hymn book. For half an hour he sang with his beautifully clear tenor the awful old Alexander hymns such as "Pull for the shore, sailor." The old couple were delighted. At the end he turned round and with the gravity that made his ugly face such a good clowning face, he asked whether they had heard Alexander's last tune. Then out of that crazy instrument he produced "Alexander's Ragtime Band," the first and perhaps the worst of the rag-time tunes assaulting England. The farmer's comment was charming: "It do seem that the Reverend was getting more cheerful in his old age."

During the same term at Wren's we had a week's break and half a dozen of us went down to stay at Lulworth Cove, at that old house where Rupert Brooke and others had stayed. It was

very hot and we did nothing but swim and sun ourselves. Stevie sunburnt his shins so badly that he could not walk, so we carted him about everywhere in a wheel-barrow. We took him down one night to the pub where there was a piano, and for about an hour Stevie played and sang. He sang songs in French, English, German and Italian and, as a characteristic piece of bravado, Vaughan Williams' chorus from *The Birds*, in Greek. When you think that his repertory that night included a lovely aria from *The Magic Flute*, and also "I'm the eighth Old Man called 'Enery," you will not be surprised to hear that our party was on the free list of the house for the rest of the week.

One more story. He was going down one evening with me to somewhere in Richmond. He was wearing evening dress with his overcoat on his arm. As he was standing in the tube I noticed that he was wearing two rather extraordinary studs of apple-green enamel. I asked him what their story was, and in an appallingly penetrating falsetto voice he shouted "I got those studs off a corpse." The whole of the carriage at once turned to see from whence this dreadful declaration had come, and Stevie, waiting like the artist he was for the dramatic pause, then continued in the same voice: "Yes, a dear old uncle left them to me in his will." What Walham Green thought of the shout of laughter that came from that carriage as we drew up at the station heaven knows.

And that is the man they picked on.—Yours, etc.,

2 Holly Place, N.W.3. W. EADY.

December 21st.

THE QUOTA

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Chesterton, a lover of paradoxes, must be smiling over the present political position, even as I am smiling. The paradox is that the National Government, advocate of private enterprise, says through the mouth of Sir John Gilmour that it is determined to go ahead with the Wheat Quota. Now the Wheat Quota really means in the end the nationalisation of the milling industry. Make no mistake about that; the Quota cannot be worked without strict and severe control of the milling industry to a degree ultimately tantamount to nationalisation. Of course I am personally glad that the National Government is to be the Nationalisation Government. But it certainly is a paradox. We used to talk about the Tories stealing the Whigs' clothes. This is a case of the National Government stealing the Socialist programme. For the real author of the Quota in its present form is my good friend Dr. Addison.—Yours, etc.,

137 Gloucester Road, J. M. KENWORTHY.

Kensington, S.W.7.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I live amongst poultry farmers (many of them, by the way, are ex-Service men) who purchase at least *one-fourth* of the wheat grown in this country. Under the "Quota scheme," will they not have to pay more for this essential foodstuff?

If they will, has the difference to come out of their own pockets or out of the taxpayer's pocket in the form of yet another subsidy, or out of the purse of the housewife by increasing the retail price of eggs—and poultry?

Should the latter course be decided on, this may be the last turkey Christmastide for many a year!—Yours, etc.,

Mark Cross, Sussex. RUPERT W. BELL.

December 19th.

THE *DAILY EXPRESS* AND THE B.B.C.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—It is only fair that if you open your columns to criticism of the *Daily Express* you should know something of its labours on behalf of the purity of the British home.

Only last week it printed a leader applauding the decision of the B.B.C. henceforth to exclude everything from the broadcasting programme "of a controversial nature." It pointed out that an official of the B.B.C. had stated that "nothing must be broadcast which would offend the susceptibilities of a maiden aunt or a child."

As there seemed to be some confusion of thought here, I wrote to the *Daily Express* in the hope that they might put the matter into more concrete shape. I pointed out that the *Daily Express* was a nice, clean, family newspaper and therefore we might take it for granted would print nothing that would, once more to quote the beautiful words of that anonymous official of the B.B.C., "offend the susceptibilities of a maiden aunt or a child."

In the light of this moral standard, I therefore asked them, thinking that it would greatly clarify the whole dispute, to name any occasion when the B.B.C. has broadcast any talk or criticism which the *Daily Express*, having regard to the interests of propriety and the susceptibilities of the maiden aunt and the child, would consider unsuitable to appear in its columns.

But so far I regret to say there has been no response to this simple question.—Yours, etc.,

18 Munster Road, H. C. BOOTH.

Teddington.

DISARMAMENT

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am sorry not to see in your always interesting notes any mention of the remarkable deliverance by the Archbishop of Canterbury at St. Paul's on December 15th. My admiration is not provoked by any religious sympathy, for I am myself an agnostic, but I thought the Archbishop's words were profoundly timely and wise. Take these few quotations:

> The International Conference on Disarmament next February will be the most momentous assembly since the Peace Conference. The lesson of the great war has been written large . . . that great armaments can only lead to war. The nations who signed the Covenant declare that "the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of armaments." Ten years have passed, yet the level of armaments remains as high as ever. The world is spending on them no less than £2,000,000 a day. The time has come to remove this intolerable burden, this continuing menace, from the peoples of the world.

And again:

> There is another and kindred disease of which armaments are a symptom—the disease of a selfish nationalism. . . . Yet the very distress which binds the whole world in bondage is a proof that the world is now one community of nations in which the welfare of one member means the welfare of all. . . . Assuredly the only hope of rescuing civilisation from its present plight is to make the fact which that very plight proclaims—namely, the oneness of the whole body of nations—the ruling principle of international life.

In deference to the exigencies of space, I have condensed (greatly to their disadvantage) the Primate's noble words, but even so are they not immensely impressive and to the point? Why does not the Premier talk like this? And why does the *Times* print its report in small type and on a back page, without a word of editorial welcome to such sage and saving counsels?

On these two points—the crying need for disarmament and the curse of nationalism as now interpreted, you and the Archbishop are at one and I am sure you have appreciated at its full value his eloquent advocacy of the gospel you have consistently proclaimed.—Yours, etc.,

Chevington Grove, W. S. GODFREY.

Bury St. Edmund's, Suffolk.

AGRICULTURAL WAGES

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—It is the privilege of one's friends to inflict wounds. I had just written an appeal to farmers to be specially scrupulous in any public statements they make about their industry now that agriculture is looking for its rehabilitation in the national economy, when I found myself credited in your last issue with precisely one of those exaggerations which destroy the best case. S. L. B. writes, "Sir Daniel Hall . . . remarked not so long ago that he (i.e., the agricultural worker) never would be worth his wages until they were doubled." S. L. B. may have some conversational extravagance in mind, but the only basis I can recall for his attribution is a sentence in my *Pilgrimage of British Farming* which reads: "The farmer's general complaint is that the majority of his men are not worth their wages, and that is very probably true: they will have to be more highly paid still before they will earn their money." That was published in 1913 when the rate of wages in the South of England was about 15s. a week.

I have been concerned with two farming enterprises which set out, not unsuccessfully, to make their men earn better money. But it demands skilled management, training and selection. Generations of bad housing and underfeeding and the migration of the more enterprising have had effects upon the rural popula-

tion that are not to be repaired all at once by an indiscriminate jump in wages.

Since S. L. B. sorrowfully continues that my "utterances can hardly avoid offence", he must forgive me if I am particular that they should be my own.—Yours, etc.,

John Innes Horticultural Institution, Mostyn Road, Merton Park, S.W.19. December 21st.

A. DANIEL HALL.

MUSICAL TARIFFS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Turner's article on "Musical Tariffs" is admirable in theory; unfortunately, he leaves out of account two factors which in practice destroy his argument: the snobbish outlook of the general musical public which demands a foreign name, regardless and ignorant of its holder's merits as an artist, and the pandering to and encouraging of this attitude by impresarios. Proof of the existence of this attitude is afforded by the instances of English artists adopting foreign names, and I challenge Mr. Turner to produce one outstanding English artist who did not have to make his reputation by foreign tours before being accepted here.

Let Mr. Turner study the prospectus of Lionel Powell's celebrity concerts, Voltena, Vronsky, Dorfmann, or the list of artists for South Coast seaside festivals. Does he really think there are not English pianists as good?

Until the public has got rid of this Victorian obsession, and until our concert managers pluck up sufficient courage to engage outstanding English artists (such as John Hunt and Kathleen Long, to name only two), Mr. Turner's righteous indignation will have no relation to the realities of the situation.—Yours, etc.,

4 Brick Court, Temple, E.C. ERIC FALK.

DEAN INGE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In your issue of December 19th Mr. Richard Sunne speaks of the residence at Cambridge of the present Dean of St. Paul's as "but that of a graduate." He misinforms your readers. Dr. Inge's residence at Oxford was "but that of a graduate." As an undergraduate he was at King's College, Cambridge.—Yours, etc.,

University Club, Liverpool. CANTABRIGIENSIS.

Miscellany

THE GODS WHOM MEN LOVE DIE OLD

IN the inner chamber of his own Being sits an old God, warming himself at the fires of life. There is nothing god-like about him, of the conventional kind; quiet and studious, he sits—a figure (both in costume and appearance) rather reminding one of Erasmus, the man who was so much wiser than that age which made so little use of him. Storms may have gone on all round him, but they have not gone over him: as a looker-on, he has acquired wisdom; and from the work of his own hands has learned experience—not imputing all the mistakes to those for whose lives he was responsible. So now he sits reading the Book of Life by the light of his own fire; and as he slowly turns the pages, a faint radiance seems to come out of them and strike the restful face, softening, but not eliminating, the lines of age. Under his hands, stretched out to warm themselves, a globe of incandescent light, full of moving colours, slowly revolves on its carven socket. Here, in symbol or in fact, is the world of his making; and since we find them thus together, they still have, we may assume, some use for each other.

On the outer door of the misty chamber, whose walls melt into a cloud-like obscurity, comes a knock, which, after a while, is repeated. The QUIET GOD *hears, but does not disturb himself; slowly he turns a page; and, still reading, speaks:*

QUIET GOD. Come in!

[*The figure which enters is of a different character. Half priest, half warrior, he carries about his Person symbols of godhead which no one can mistake: they have been the distinguishing marks of his profession for many centuries; and they still excite awe and reverence among minds trained to accept them. In a light which is all his own, he moves toward the studious figure; and stands looking down at him for a while, a little puzzled, perhaps, to find his arrival taken so quietly. And, as we look at them, we wonder by what names we shall distinguish them. "*QUIETUS*" may stand fairly obviously for the one; and "*DECUS*" (at his own valuation) will do sufficiently well for the other.*]

DECUS. Well, Brother, how are you getting on?

QUIET (*cheerfully*). Oh, nicely. I'm getting old.

DECUS. Getting old? But a God shouldn't grow old. Gods are immortal.

QUIET. Yes: I used to think so. But it's not true. You know, yourself, many of the Gods have grown old: men no longer know of them—they have gone utterly.

DECUS. *False* gods, yes.

QUIET. Oh, no. They were true enough in their day. Men believed in them. Now that they don't, they're gone.

DECUS. The life of a God—if he be a true God—does not depend on man's belief in him.

QUIET. Doesn't it? I'm not sure. I can't myself remember the time when I had not believers—worshippers.

DECUS. But you made *your* world (as I made mine) before men came into it.

QUIET. Well, they say so. Perhaps, in my sub-conscious mind, I did; but not consciously. Can you remember anything—before?

DECUS. Yes. I can remember—storm, tempest, the raging of seas, the howling of wolves, the scream of the eagle, the roar of the lion: pain, darkness—death.

QUIET. Yes; but nothing else—till man came. The idea that you *were* a God did not occur to you till then. That was your own voice you heard: but it was only a voice, and a divided one. You weren't a God then. You were only hungering to become one—without knowing what you were hungering for.

DECUS. Can one be hungry for that which does not exist?

QUIET. Why, yes. I am hungry to-day for something man has not yet given me: something which I may never live to receive. But I *may!* I'm waiting.

DECUS. And while waiting, you are growing old? *I'm* not!

QUIET. Then what *are* you doing?

DECUS. Ruling, directing, ordering all things to my will.

QUIET. And do they always obey?

DECUS. When they don't, I punish them!

QUIET. Do they obey then?

DECUS. Sometimes.

QUIET. And when they don't?

DECUS. I punish them again.

QUIET. Do you never cease punishing when they disobey?

DECUS. No! If I did, my Kingdom on earth would be over.

QUIET. Ah! I *have* ceased punishing.

DECUS. Then no wonder you've grown old!

QUIET. You are right, Brother. It is the way of age and wisdom, that I have found at last. I leave men to punish themselves.

DECUS (*incredulously*). And do they?

QUIET. Oh, yes! Yes, indeed! Terribly! Far worse than I should have the heart to punish them, myself.

DECUS. Then why don't you go on punishing them?

QUIET. Because, punishing themselves, they learn more than if *I* did it.

DECUS. What do they learn ?

QUIET. Their mistakes. Punish a man, he may still stick to his opinion—think you are unjust. Leave him to punish himself, he learns better.

DECUS. You are a strange God !

QUIET. Yes : strange even to myself ; for I, too, am learning.

DECUS. Are you punishing—yourself ?

QUIET. In a way, yes. I am finding out where I have made mistakes.

DECUS. A God *never* makes mistakes !

QUIET. That is what your worshippers always say as a preliminary when they pray to you—*not to make them !* But *you* still do ; and keep yourself young by punishing them ! I—am growing old.

DECUS. And you mean to go on—growing old ?

QUIET. Yes.

DECUS. And when you have grown so old that you cannot grow older—what then ?

QUIET. Then I shall die.

DECUS. A God can't die.

QUIET. Oh, yes, he can ! Did not Saturn eat up his own children, who would have become Gods had he *not* eaten them ? And where is Baal ? Where is Ashtaroth ? You call them " false gods." But they were true once ; and, in their worshippers, were very much alive.

DECUS. And do you propose to die, too—like them ?

QUIET. Not *quite* like them. *They* didn't want to die.

DECUS. You mean to die willingly ?

QUIET. Willingly ? Oh, yes.

DECUS. Now you do interest me. How do you propose to die—willingly ? If a God dies, it must mean that His worshippers have learned to do without Him—don't want Him any more.

QUIET. Yes : I agree.

DECUS. Therefore has already ceased to be a God.

QUIET. Quite so.

DECUS. What do you think a God is for, then ?

QUIET. Mainly the means to an end. He helps men to find themselves. When they *have* found themselves, they don't need him any more. The Two have become One. . . . I'm waiting—for that.

DECUS. Is that why you are feeling old ?

QUIET. Yes, I think so.

DECUS. Because men don't need you ?

QUIET. Oh, they need me still—I don't feel dead yet ; but they won't always. When I've taught them to love—really to love—I shall have done my work.

DECUS. But—be honest !—don't you need something yourself to make you satisfied—from them ? Don't you want to receive their worship ?

QUIET. Yes : if they want to give it, I want to receive it. But not otherwise.

DECUS. Which decides ?

QUIET. I don't know. We do it between us.

DECUS. *I* don't ! You make yourself too cheap, Brother ! Little should I get if I took nothing but what was given me willingly. I make *my* worshippers give me what they don't *want* to give me !

QUIET. For instance ?

DECUS. Whatever they hold most precious on earth—I demand in sacrifice : their own children sometimes.

QUIET. Yes : but if they sacrifice these, it is because they want to. If they did not, they would not do it.

DECUS. *Wouldn't* they ?

QUIET. No. What we get in sacrifice depends entirely on what men *want* to sacrifice. We are in their hands, though they think that they are in ours.

DECUS. They don't *think*—they believe it, they know it !

QUIET. Yes ; but *I* don't. As I've grown old I've grown wise. My sacrifices have changed ; and it isn't *I* that have changed them. Men give me the sacrifices that suit their own needs best.

DECUS. What sort of sacrifice do you get now ?

QUIET. Love.

DECUS. Love, eh ? Didn't they always love you ?

QUIET. No. They feared me ; just as yours fear you. When they sacrificed to me with blood and burnt flesh, they didn't love me ; nor did I love them.

DECUS. What did you do, then ?

QUIET. Do ?

DECUS. Yes. What did you feel toward them ? Fear ?

QUIET. No, no. I was never afraid of them. They puzzled me. I liked the smell of their sacrifices—their blood, and their burnt offerings, though I didn't quite know why. But it took me a long time to find out that they feared me. Had I feared *them*, I might have found out much sooner.

DECUS. Oh ? Why ?

QUIET. Because it would have made us nearer to each other.

DECUS. Nearer, eh ?

QUIET. Yes : we should have been more alike. True worship only comes when the worshipper gives back as he receives. Only then do the worshippers and the worshipped really know each other. . . . Fear separates. When I found they were afraid of me, I was sorry for them—that they did not understand.

DECUS. Did not understand what ?

QUIET. Me. . . . That I had no wish to hurt them. But though I pitied them, I could not tell them. They had to find it out for themselves. It took a long time.

DECUS. Yes ? Well ?

QUIET. And all that time they went on sacrificing to me. But, as I watched, I saw that it meant less and less to them. And as it meant less and less to *them*, so it meant less and less to *me*. . . . I left off caring for the smell of blood and burnt flesh. All my taste for it was gone. So when they left off, I didn't miss it. Other things had come in its place. They still worshipped me, but in a different way.

DECUS. In what way different ?

QUIET. Not in doing, but in being. It was very curious to watch them—very puzzling : for I saw they were trying to be something different from what they had been before. And one day I made a great discovery : they were trying to be like—me !

DECUS. How blasphemous ! Did they succeed ?

QUIET. Indeed, no ! Far from it : for, still having their old fear of me, they were trying to make others fear *them*, in order to please *me !* Fear was to make men what they wanted them to be—what they thought *I* wanted them to be. Yet what I wanted them to be, I did not know myself. I only wanted myself to be known and understood. And there they were—in worship of *me*—filling the world with fear ! Fear ! What a mistake.

DECUS. Well, I don't find fear a bad thing myself. I rule my followers by fear ; and *I* don't feel old—yet. Try it again for a bit !

QUIET. No, no. I couldn't go back to it. Only if I feared *them* would it be possible.

DECUS. But how *can* a God fear man—his own making ?

QUIET. Only if he is afraid to die.

DECUS. Die !

QUIET. Yes. A God mustn't be afraid to die. I've found that out. When he is no longer afraid to die, men no longer fear him. They love him. He enters the lives of those that worship him, and lives—in *them*.

DECUS. I don't understand—

QUIET. I didn't till I began to feel old. Then I began to understand : I was learning to die.

DECUS. But you said just now that you didn't feel like dying.

QUIET. No, not yet — because, still in want, men worship me. But when they no longer worship me, then I shall know my time has come to die.

DECUS. Why should you let them cease worshipping you?

QUIET. I can't help it.

DECUS. That seems a poor end to me!

QUIET. Yes. I used to think so. But one day I heard one of my worshippers say: "God is love." At first it surprised me. And then I found it was true. I love my worshippers. I love those that don't worship me. I love everyone. When it is equally true that men love—as much as I do: when it can be said "Man is love," he won't need *me* any more. Love will have become man. It's coming; but it's taking a long time.

DECUS. And so—you are feeling old?

QUIET. Yes: feeling old. I don't mind feeling old. It means that the time is coming when man won't need me. But he needs me still. . . . I'm waiting.. And while I've been waiting, I've found out something that I did not know before.

DECUS. What?

QUIET. Something beautiful: something that makes me quite contented to feel old.

DECUS. Well, what?

QUIET. The Gods whom men love die old. . . . They love me. I've had a long life. . . . I shall die—old.

LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

ASTROLOGERS

ON the wireless I heard a clergyman repeating
An old tale: Not man, but God
Is the end and measure of man's universe.
After him a learned astronomer spoke:
Matter has not always been; somebody must
Have begotten it once; therefore God must be.
Doubtless, I thought, this clergyman is a better man,
The astronomer a far cleverer than myself;
So that must be why their wisdom to me seems folly,
Because I am too foolish to understand.
The supply of clergymen of late has been running short;
But scientists are always plentiful as bilberries:
So the heavens may still declare the glory of God.
And now that the ether itself has become vocal,
None of us have any excuse for forgetting about Him.

R. C. TREVELYAN.

EPHEMERAL

MR. Ronald Jeans's comedy, *Can the Leopard . . .?* at the Haymarket Theatre shows once more out of what thin stuff a really amusing evening's entertainment can be spun—provided that the playwright's interpreters expand every hint he has given them. From this point of view *Can the Leopard . . .?* is almost as instructive to analyse as it is entertaining to see. Of course the dramatist must suggest stimulating situations, but then, even if his text is commonplace, a gifted actor or actress can put into it the subtlety and intensity which the dramatist omitted. Actors naturally love that responsibility, when they can rise to it.

Miss Gertrude Lawrence is right at the top of her profession. Her vitality is exhilarating, her impetuosity graceful. She gives, too, the impression, like a first-rate music-hall artist, of enjoying *with* the audience the fun she creates. At pathetic moments she never takes refuge in a noncommital reserve, that resource of the inexpressive. On the contrary her pathos is exuberant without being overdone. I have never seen her in a great part, but I have never seen her fail to get the utmost out of every part she has played.

At the Haymarket Theatre she is well supported by all the other members of the cast; but if she had not this faculty of expanding every hint the dramatist has given her, *Can the Leopard . . .?* instead of being, as I said, a most amusing entertainment, would have been a flat little play.

But Mr. Jeans had his little idea: *Can the Leopard . . .?* is the story of the marriage of a harum-scarum, slip-slop, childishly unpractical woman painter. She throws over an artist suitor of much the same temperament to marry a methodical business-like architect. Richard Bellfry (admirably played by Mr. Ian Hunter) finds after marriage that Harriet's childish incompetence, which had been so attractive during courtship, is exasperating in a wife; while Harriet, on her side, who had thought that there could be nothing more delightful than having her life run for her, finds her husband's mechanical forethought maddening to live with. There is, however, a real bond between these two which keeps their spirited matrimonial rows on the level of light comedy. Harriet at moments is convinced that she has made a mistake, and she very nearly responds to the advances of her old lover, Nicholas Waterlow. But it is not until methodical Richard shows some signs of being attracted by the childish poopishness of her friend, Daphne Hibberd, that her loyalty is shaken. Daphne appeals to his sense of male superiority, just as Harriet had done at first. But two years have passed since Waterlow made advances to her, and Harriet's attempt to apply the bellows to her old flame fails humiliatingly. The play ends in showing that as far as method and orderliness are concerned her apparent improvement has been an entire fraud. Not a bill has been paid for months and the chaos to which she has reduced the house-keeping at the end of the last Act is on a par with the carelessness with which she set fire to her bedroom at the end of the second.

The tantrum scenes are really amusing, especially the one where husband and wife are dressing in a hurry for dinner. So, too, is the dumb-show scene when Harriet rehearses the manner in which she will make love to Nicholas Waterlow, and its contrast with the flatness and failure of those devices when he arrives. In these scenes, and indeed throughout, there are subtle little points on which the actors seize with delight. Mr. Ronald Jeans would be helpless without his interpreters, but he must be given the credit of providing a dialogue which gives them their opportunities.

The practical lesson which is to be learnt from plays of this calibre is that the situations which amuse on the stage are precisely those which make people laugh in actual life. It is not necessary, as we all know, to be witty in order to amuse other people—to be quick and lively is quite enough, and the situations which people look back on as "screamingly funny" may have very little in them: a man abusing a picture to the artist who has painted it will do, or a wrangle between two men, the one matter-of-fact and the other pretentious. When in the first act Bellfry is making an inventory of the china in Harriet's studio, he finds that there is only one egg-cup. This prompts Waterlow to say that a single egg-cup is the surest proof of a woman's virtue, a generalisation which Bellfry proceeds to dispute by pointing out that all women do not like eggs for breakfast and many prefer them poached. This does not sound funny, does it? But on the stage it is distinctly amusing. So much the worse for the stage, I can imagine the anti-playgoer say. Not at all; the poorness of the epigram and the ill-tempered argument bring out a clash of character which becomes highly amusing when the conflict is watched by a woman who knows that the two men are already beginning to be jealous of each other. On the stage the little words and gestures with which Miss Lawrence both exacerbates and soothes them alternately are amusing to watch. Mr. Ronald Jeans strikes me as having learnt a great deal from the dialogue of Mr. Noel Coward. The breakfast scene in *Private Lives*, for instance, was nothing to read, but extremely amusing on the stage. In the most immediately

popular kind of modern comedy, wit must possess a certain amount of psychological subtlety, but need not improve upon that of actual life. Nowadays to amuse as a playwright you must be first and foremost natural. This means, of course, that though your plays may have long runs nobody will ever read them, except those who want to learn how you did the trick. There is a premium to-day upon the ephemeral.

DESMOND MACCARTHY.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Falstaff "In Love"

THE chief—I am tempted to say reluctantly the only—interest for me in the People's Theatre production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Duchess Theatre is Mr. Baliol Holloway's brilliant refutation of the academic cant which insists that the Falstaff of *The Merry Wives* is in some mysterious way not the Falstaff of the historical plays. With half-a-dozen natural touches he demonstrates once and for all the shallowness of assuming that, because the fat knight is the butt of the company, he has necessarily suffered some radical change—almost a senile collapse. There is no trace of it in Mr. Holloway's performance. He accepts every defeat with a rueful, half ironical philosophy—an implicit recognition that having ventured out of his element he must put up with the consequences. For Falstaff, the immortal boon companion of men, is not only out of his element with respectable women, he is necessarily their sworn enemy. The tradition that the piece was written because Queen Elizabeth (impossible creature) wished to see Falstaff in love may indeed be true. But she was surely shrewd enough to realise that Shakespeare, still an artist before a courtier, was showing her nothing of the kind. By providing Falstaff with a thoroughly rational and unromantic motive at the very outset of the play, his creator rescues him for all time from the deeper humiliations which would doubtless have pleased Elizabeth better. For both Falstaff and Shakespeare it was a case of *force majeure*. It would be pleasant to record that Mr. Holloway's production was as intelligent and efficient as his performance, but unfortunately it was slipshod and lacked gusto. However, Messrs. Fewlass Llewellyn and Murri Moncrieff were funny at times as Sir Hugh Evans and Dr. Caius, and Miss Olive Walter's broad homeliness as Mistress Quickly was thoroughly satisfying.

"Four People"

A company of more than competent amateur standards, and a producer who insisted on something more than a coronation pace might have given a semblance of vitality and interest to Mr. Miles Malleson's comedy, presented at the Players' Theatre. But it would certainly have been no more than a semblance. By every rule of logic the play comes to an end when Evelyn Stafford learns that Jill Chitterton, a foolish virgin left in her charge by travelling parents, contemplates running away with Maurice Woldingham, in ignorance of the fact that she is merely a consolation prize, a substitute for Evelyn herself. The first act curtain falls on the revelation, and we are left to assume that the two women chat through the interval about the weather, in order that two more acts of manœuvring and argument may follow before Evelyn tells the truth. A gleam of a new thematic interest flickers for a moment when the young lady's respectable wooer, who theoretically has no use for respectability, endeavours to save her from her would-be seducer, whose one anxiety is to regularise the proposed union as completely as possible. But the opportunities arrive too late, and even then are mishandled. The acting was uniformly mediocre, save for Miss Ena Wood-Sims, who, with a voice of resentful compliance, managed to turn a stage maid into a human being in half-a-dozen sentences.

Film or Play?

Late Night Final, in its original form, always looked to me more like a film scenario than a stage play; so I went with considerable interest to *Five Star Final*, the film version which begins at the Carlton on Boxing Day. Somehow I came away with the impression that the film version was more like a play than a picture. Perhaps the author's whole conception wavered uncertainly between the two. Perhaps neither play nor picture has been quite logically produced. Certainly the dialogue, which seemed meagre on the stage, was plethoric in the picture, while the moral indignation and general uplift were too heavily stressed. The minor characters, difficult because meant to be colourless, were less successful than they were on the stage, while the scenes symbolising domestic felicity and innocence were not a little trying. The film is, however, raised out of the ruck by the shattering personality of Edward G. Robinson, who takes the part of the Editor. As long as he is on the stage, we are perfectly satisfied. Since I first saw him, I have thought him one of the best screen actors in the world, and his performance in *Five Star Final* only confirms my impression. With his extraordinary appearance and immense energy, he can really, in the words of cinema publicity, "register emotion," not merely throw himself about. *Five Star Final* is not as good a picture as *Little Cæsar*, but I would go a long way to see any film, however silly, in which Edward Robinson took a leading part.

"The Nelson Touch."

That all politicians are fools and all ne'er-do-wells are misunderstood geniuses are perhaps the two generalisations most popular among our writers in the light romantic style to-day. *The Nelson Touch* at St. Martin's Theatre incorporates them both with some light success. The Earl of Duncaster, a pompous and silly man, is a Cabinet Minister. With his colleagues—presumably of like calibre to himself—he so mismanages the country that they find themselves suddenly on the brink of war with Arabia. Three sheiks are on their way to London for a conference with Duncaster; the audience squirms with anticipation of the mishandling of the situation—and then arrives the family Black Sheep, Duncaster's younger brother, from Arabia, no less, and choc-a-block with knowledge of Arabia in general and of the three sheiks in particular which, if used, would bring the conference to a peaceful close in a day. But will Duncaster listen to Richard? He will not. However, the black sheep is used to such setbacks as this, and by a mixture of bluff, bullying and blackmail he saves Duncaster and the government and sets England and Arabia on their feet again. This play may be relied upon to please frivolous and romantic playgoers alike. The whole cast made the most of the heroics or fun that fell to their share, while Felix Aylmer's cabinet minister is as ignorant and futile as one could wish, and Francis Lister's high-minded young blackmailer is the pink of heroic propriety. As for which was the more Nelsonian of the two—that is a problem that everyone must solve for himself.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Saturday, December 26th—
- Rugby Football, London *v.* S. Africans, Twickenham.
- "Charmeuse," by E. Temple Thurston, Embassy Theatre.
- "The Cherry Orchard," by Tchehov, Moscow Art Theatre Players, Kingsway Theatre.
- "Champion North," Royalty Theatre.

Monday, December 28th—
- "Robin Hood," by William Devereux and Henry Hamilton, "Q" Theatre.
- "The Knight of the Burning Pestle," Old Vic.

Friday, January 1st—
- Christmas Revue for Children, Arts Theatre.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

FIN-DE-SIÈCLE—there must be many for whom the words still have a haunting fascination. I cannot myself remember their earliest use, but during the late 'nineties they were common either in accusation or defence of prevailing fashions in all kinds of human activities. *The Yellow Book*, *The Savoy*, the decadents, *l'art nouveau*, the growing popularity of restaurants, Mr. Max Beerbohm's caricatures, *The Butterfly*, the plays of Maeterlinck, Sada Yacco's acting, the New Humour—all of these were *fin-de-siècle*. Somehow, too, we blamed the poor declining century for the bitter tragedy of the Dreyfus case, the black disaster of our war in South Africa, and the growing spirit of aggrandisement in Germany. Good things and bad, deplorable and merry, were alike put down as the consequence of our sense of arriving at the end of an epoch. Towards its very close we had the great battle of the " '00's " against the " '01's," a battle only excelled in fury and folly by that between the Big-Endians and Little-Endians, recorded by Lemuel Gulliver in his history of Lilliput. There were those who insisted that the new century began in 1900; others who declared that 1st January, 1901, was the first day of the twentieth century. For all I know, there may still be people who believe that the first century began with the year 0. Anyway, the question was argued with an acerbity and a personal feeling that were, once more, typically *fin-de-siècle*.

* * *

Was not boredom, then, one of the signs of *fin-de-siècle*? Assuredly; but it was a passionate boredom. We were more vigorous about our languors than are most men to-day about their excesses; we were desperately indifferent, splendidly and magnificently fatigued, and paraded our lassitudes and our incredulities with a pomp rarely given now to men's most eager beliefs. We were weary, but determined our weariness should be proclaimed, and if none other would do it the tired decadent must wind his own troubled trumpet. Most efforts in English to reconstruct the period have dealt only with the decadents. Even to men who were then very young, the Green Carnation covered far too much of the landscape—

> A cloud was on the mind of men, and wailing went the weather,
> Yea a sick cloud upon the soul when we were boys together.
> Science announced nonentity, and art admired decay;
> The world was old and ended; but you and I were gay.
> Round us in antic order their crippled vices came—
> Lust that had lost its laughter, fear that had lost its shame.
> Like the white lock of Whistler, that lit our aimless gloom,
> Men showed their own white feather as proudly as a plume.
> Life was a fly that faded and death a drone that stung;
> The world was very old indeed when you and I were young.

What does the poet think of the world now? As I look back to a more recent boyhood than his, the world-weary spirit of our childhood seems gay and sparkling compared to the world inhabited, not by the very young, but by men who are in the early thirties. They seem to have in their hearts the boredom which the men of the *fin-de-siècle* wore as a button-hole or, the more extravagant, as a cloak.

* * *

In Paris it was different, if M. Paul Morand can be trusted. He begins his book " 1900 " (Edition de France, 15 francs) with a vehemently expressed statement of the vast difference between then and now.

There is a characteristic extravagance in this; M. Morand pays tribute by a phrase to the epoch of which he writes, an epoch that, in Paris at least, was definitely the day of *panache*. For

> Je dois au hasard le triste privilège d'être né dans l'autre siècle, à une époque aussi éloignée de celle-ci que le Patagonie l'est de Pantin, ou que Savonarole l'est de Charlie Chaplin.

Paul Morand's France is Paris, just as the young Chesterton's England was London, and while you may meet, at least in the home counties and perhaps as far as Hereford or Nottingham, country people who would admit that London is representative, I doubt if you would ever meet a Frenchman who would not deny indignantly that Paris represented anything but herself. Did even the Dreyfus case split provincial opinion, as it split Parisian? Certainly I know from the evidence of friends and relatives who were in France at the time that the hatred felt in Paris towards the English in that symbolic year 1900 was not felt in the provinces, at least in the small country towns. M. Morand's book, as a sketch of *fin-de-siècle* Paris, is admirable reading. At times he declines rather on to the mere catalogue, but generally his narrative is full of colour, of a pleasant allusiveness. How well done is the introduction of Marcel Proust in the last chapter:

> A young soldier, with red epaulettes, white gaiters, a yellow pompon and fancy boots, very pale, very intellectual, is lost in contemplation of the " queen of love," whom old rascals follow, holding their walking-sticks by the tip. . . . The soldier is in love with Paris, with women, with horses wearing Parma violets, and he notices carefully how the coachmen with mutton-chop whiskers and tight collars carry themselves, and the footmen, with their arms crossed over their cravats of white piqué. He will not forget any of it. " As you can see, the loose-fitting Raglan has finally beaten the shaped overcoat; another Nationalist defeat! " He watches, as they pass, those men of fashion whom the poor fops try to copy: Ridgeway, Henri de Breteuil, La Force, Henri Costa, du Lau, Aymon de Lucinge, Errazu, Janzé, Haas, Luzarche d'Azay, Béarn, Boni de Castellane, Charles de la Rochefoucauld, Roman and Joseph Potocki, who claim to be the heirs of the Prince de Sagan. " Here's Montesquieu in his carriage: is he pretending he doesn't see me? or is he hurrying to reach Versailles, Versailles, *of which he is the thoughtful Marie Antoinette?* " " And I mustn't forget," notes the Tommy, " to ask the valet if the Duke's clothes should be put in a drawer in the English way, or hung up in a wardrobe, whether his boots are polished with a bone and if his clothes-brushes are of the best Kentish bristles ". . . . This soldier, whom we meet at Madeleine Lemaire's, and who is waiting to see the Duchesse de Guermantes go by, fifteen years later I shall know his name: it is Marcel Proust.

* * *

M. Morand, except when he discusses literature, is as superficial as his latest books have led us to expect. There is little in this book, except the slighter gossip, which could not have been written by a foreigner. The brief sketch of Sarah Bernhardt is very inferior to that recently given us by Mr. Graham Robertson, and it is easy to see that Morand is not qualified to speak of the religious changes which have occurred in France in the last thirty years. He notes, without any comment of approval or disapproval, a change which he thinks has come about in the position of the author:

> One would think it natural enough for Zola or Coppée to be elected President of the Republic. . . . When France greeted Kruger, it was through the lips of Rostand she honoured him. That young sovereign of women, the man who wrote *Demi-Vierges*, Marcel Prévost, though not yet an Academician, gives his advice to the Senate in the newspapers. Would anyone think it likely that Poincaré would to-day listen attentively to Mauriac? . . . Can one see Gide as leader of the opposition? Why, there are any number of sensible men, whose fathers put Lamartine and Victor Hugo into power, who cannot make out to-day how Claudel ever became an ambassador.

So the end of the century takes on the charm of all times past. M. Morand is bewitched by his memories. Had Zola been mentioned for President, Zola who was not even in the Academy, there would have been as much fuss as there would be to-day if Jacques Maritain were sent as ambassador to Washington, or Henri Brémond went to Moscow, or Paul Valéry or Jean Cocteau were accredited to the Palace of St. James. Indeed, there would be less fuss now, for the little misgivings of the *fin-de-siècle* are nothing beside the anxieties and the accidie of this generation

RICHARD SUNNE.

THE FRINGE OF A COMPOSITE ART

The Costume of the Theatre. By THEODORE KOMISARJEVSKY. Bles. 25s.

"Once more unto the breach, good friends," cries Mr. Geoffrey Bles to the Russians, and again storms the English citadel with another book from Moscow, this time by a Russian who seems to have settled in England.

This second book is printed, and issued by Mr. Bles just as well as was his first, Stanislavsky's *My Life in Art*. Bound in a handsome dark red cloth, with a cream cloth back, and lettered in pale gold, it is entitled *The Costume of the Theatre*, a rather misleading title, since, on his first page, the author confesses that he has "not attempted to write a 'complete history' of costume in the theatre," and offers his pages (there are only 171, and printed in fine large type) "merely as an essay upon the subject."

As an essay, it is too full of names and dates: as a history, it is not nearly full enough of them. There is quite a bit of theory in it, and the author refers often enough to people who never made a costume in their lives, and omits to speak of some of the real costume-makers. His omissions are curious. Stanislavsky is forgotten, but Van Gogh is remembered. Hilaire Hiler is not here—this is a grave omission, for Hiler has to his credit at least one important book on costume, and is one of the authorities. A portrait of Irving as King Lear is included, but not a word about the actor—and as the book is emphatically a pro and con book, it would have been of interest to English readers to discover whether the author was pro Irving or against him, and why; but probably he knows nothing about Irving's important contribution to this question. I suppose this, for his knowledge of the work of many other Englishmen is also rather slight.

He hasn't a word to say about our old friend Planché. Actors celebrated for their understanding of what a stage costume can do, and how to make it do it, he ignores entirely; two Frenchmen, for example, Mélingue and Ménier, and another—Mounet Sully. But he dumps the Russian goods on us right enough, and for that we must be grateful. How he gets them past the Customs House in these difficult days beats me, and for that we must admire him!

If he does not do his work as well as the authors of the standard works on theatrical costume, it is perhaps because he wrote it "on the quiet lake of Gründlsee." I take it that Monsieur Komisarjevsky is too much of an artistic nature, if not a practical artist, to be able to cope with all the complications necessary to the making of such a work. The compiler needs a library of thousands of books; he needs years of card-indexing and everything ready at his elbow. And artists are not specially fond of compilation; if Monsieur Komisarjevsky had cared at all for it, he could not have compressed the whole of the nineteenth century into sixteen and a half pages—pages which he begins thus:

> During the nineteenth century, actors on the European stage were dressed with much less taste and æsthetic sense than in the preceding centuries, and their costumes in dramatic and especially in operatic shows frequently consisted of a mixture of different periods and ridiculous fancies.

I should have thought that the actors of the nineteenth century had done pretty clever things in the way of developing theatrical costume, and I think they knew how to *use* it better than do a great number of the actors of the twentieth, and better than most of those of the eighteenth century—to which century, by the way, our author devotes only thirteen and a half pages.

Thus we see that thirty out of one hundred and seventy-one pages are given to two centuries—which is a fair allowance, except that everything has to be excluded but the bare bones.

And these I cannot find.

Still the discursive style is enjoyable, and, indeed, here and there are entertaining bits—for example, where he writes of *Salome*:

> The ignorance and disregard of the modern producers, while devising their costumes and sets, for the intentions and style of the dramatists are often unbelievable. Everyone who can *read* must be able to understand that Oscar Wilde's *Salome* was written as an ultra-modern fantasy. Beardsley quite rightly interpreted it by his modern illustrations. On our stage, however, the operatic producers, staging Strauss' musical drama, make out of Wilde's play an historical show, and in its recent London production this play was treated, as far as costumes were concerned, as an Elephant and Castle melodrama, with Roman warriors clattering about in their hired armour like a collection of animated brass Russian samovars.

Again:

> How often have I seen the performance of an actor ruined the moment he put on his costume.

A really amusing story is told in the first chapter, where the author touches on the question, "To dress or not to dress":

> The fact that the sense of bodily shame is by no means inborn in mankind is well illustrated by a story told by the owner of a yacht who happened to be cruising in the East. "We were six on board," he writes: "a young married couple, a pretty young widow, and a wealthy Englishman with a very beautiful daughter. One morning Chinese pirates boarded the ship, took us to the coast, and there stripped us of our clothes. Leaving us with bread and water, they locked us in an empty hut and went away, saying that we should regain our clothes and our freedom when they had got a ransom for us. At first we men felt ashamed, but were at the same time curious to see what our ladies looked like undressed. They, however, only showed us their backs. A little later curiosity got the upper hand with them also, and they turned and faced us. Gradually we began to talk naturally, and even indulged in comparison, jokes and bold remarks. After four days' captivity embarrassment disappeared altogether, and the absence of clothes worried us no longer. Our eyes and thoughts became accustomed to the new appearance of our lady companions. Their nakedness (though very attractive) ceased to interest us, and seemed less worthy of attention than the dresses by means of which civilisation had previously concealed it from us. I then understood why some people see in women's dresses means of sexual excitement. In a week's time we were all living in the happy innocence of the primitives. Finally, we were liberated by the pirates and were given our clothes, and the ladies at once started to dress themselves hurriedly in a corner. When I approached them, I was warned off by the bashful, piercing screams of all three of them. Do you know why? Because they had nothing on but their underwear."

Well, there is nothing at all bashful about Monsieur Theodore Komisarjevsky. His book is one of the slightest of books ever taken to cover a man with—and yet out he comes with it, suggesting that, slight as it is, the amateur may like it. As indeed the amateur is sure to do; and he can surely afford the mere twenty-five shillings.

So dump down the dollars and crown the foreigner with laurel and deck him with garlands. Have we not always written that art has no frontiers, and is not the costume of the theatre almost a bit of a cosmopolitan fringe of a very composite art?

E. GORDON CRAIG.

A CRITIC OF IDEAS

The Human Parrot and other Essays. By MONTGOMERY BELGION. Oxford University Press. 12s. 6d.

Mr. Belgion is confessedly a seeker of what he may devour in the way of views and theories: in all but one of the eleven essays of which this volume consists his aim is to show that somebody is wrong, whether it be M. Maritain in his view of art or the Sovietic theorists in their political philosophy. He admits the possibility that he himself is open to the criticism of being simply negative, but he counters this by saying: "Such a charge will not disturb me. I am convinced that at this juncture it is essential in dealing with the problems I discuss to feel one's way. And, in any case, I write to raise questions, not to bury them." This is a perfectly sound reply on the part of one who thinks that the touchstone of reason is far too seldom applied in considering the pet theories of to-day, and that, as he points out in the first chapter—on the origin and nature of language—which gives the book its picturesque but insufficiently descriptive name, our common statements on belief are "formulæ we have memorised without in the least understanding them. . . . Man is the Human Parrot." The Parrot having the power of listening to argument, if not of being convinced by it, Mr. Belgion, who argues very well, is fulfilling a most useful function. It is possible that hardly a single one of the champions of the ideas that he attacks would agree that he has fairly stated their position; and indeed there were occasions when it seemed to me that, without intending to employ any sophistic art or to display that brilliant dialectic of stratagem by which Socrates made an enemy of Aristophanes, Mr. Belgion is capable of interpreting the data of his own experience somewhat doubtfully. Yet to my mind he is a fair critic.

This book, which may be warmly recommended to all thinking persons, divides into two parts. The first part deals wholly with questions of art, and the second, after a transitional chapter, "God is Mammon," which convicts M. Mauriac of inconsistency and an American humanist of futility, deals really with certain

misconceptions of individuality under heads which, at first sight, seem to be unrelated. It being impossible to notice fully all the interesting points made in these essays, I can only briefly commend to the reader the studies of "Post-War Despair," "Statecraft in Russia" and "Dr. Whitehead's Cosmology," not merely as able dialectic but as definitely buttressing the idea of personal individuality and responsibility which has been most harmfully undermined in these latter days, as much by idealists as by materialists. The following passages, from the first and last of these chapters respectively, deserve the most emphatic insistence:

> It is in demanding that the individual should be free to fulfil himself that Messrs. Remarque and Read reveal themselves to be assuming a mistaken attitude to life. And it may now be seen how, although their attitude appears antithetical to Mr. Jerrold's, and the two attitudes are treated as such by their respective champions, these attitudes are not antithetical in reality. Behind the opposite conceptions of individuality which characterise them is a common assumption and a common hope. The assumption is that the individual is irresponsible. And the hope is that the earth shall be transformed into an Elysian field. At bottom the attitudes only differ in their notions of what an Elysian field is. . . . .
>
> Had Dr. Whitehead been determined to include in his account of human experience what most people mean when they speak of human responsibility the philosophy of organism could never have been constituted. For, as I began by saying, human responsibility necessitates the existence of selves, and once the existence of selves is admitted the reality cannot be the process of the becoming of actual occasions.

Useful, however, as Mr. Belgion's controversial method is in the latter part of his book, the earlier part seems to me still more useful and cogent, particularly in respect of the third, fifth and sixth chapters; though the fourth chapter, which seems to convict M. Maritain of a-Thomism in his conceptions of the fine arts and poetry, is also important. The titles of these three chapters are respectively "Meaning in Art," "The Irresponsible Propagandist" and "What is Criticism?": the aim of the first is to disprove the common theories (*a*) that an artist seeks to express himself in his art, and (*b*) that art is symbolic; that of the second is to disprove the notion that imaginative literature is instructive about life; and that of the third is to refute the argument put forward by Mr. I. A. Richards that, given a proper reading of it, poetry can take the place of religious and other fundamental beliefs. The contrary assertions that Mr. Belgion puts forward, to my mind, with complete cogency, are that art, whatever else it be, is not self-expression; that imaginative literature is invariably constructed upon the artist's individual theory of life, and that its truth or falsity to reality can only be tested by previous knowledge on the part of the percipient; and that "nobody can ever learn from a poem itself that the emotions it imitates are profound and serious. To recognise this, one must already know what is profound and serious." Mr. Belgion continues the last-quoted words thus:

> And what is profound and serious in our emotional life we can only learn from experience of life illuminated by our intelligence. Before a man can know what is profoundly and seriously moving in life he must have lived. . . . There is no other way. But to have lived is not enough: he must also be sufficiently intelligent to discern, thanks to his experience of life, when and by what human beings are in fact profoundly and seriously moved. The combination of experience with adequate intelligence is inevitably rare, since intelligence itself is rare.

So, also, he uncompromisingly asserts, the number of those "who will be fully equal to enjoying poetry must ever be very small. For the great majority of us the fullest enjoyment of poetry must remain beyond our reach." This may sound a hard saying, but it is infinitely preferable to be hard than to be soft in these matters, for thus alone can any useful standard be set or guidance established. And it does not deny that in reading novels we are reminded of the truth about mankind, so far as we know it already, or that we can contemplate in poetry "the greater values," provided that we apprehend what they are. In fact, these three chapters are a plea for the "critical" way of enjoying art as distinguished from what Mr. Belgion calls the "spontaneous" way. The spontaneous way must come first, for if we never had been carried away by a work of art, we should be unlikely to inquire any further into it; but, even as an appreciation, it must always be a second best, albeit a second best beyond which, for want of leisure or opportunity, none of us can progress for *all* the arts. No doubt this is an aristocratic theory of art and criticism against which instinctive democrats will rage: it is also an unromantic theory that will make romantics overflow with wrath. Yet democracy has never disposed of the fact that artists, because they are few and yet exercise sway over the many, are an aristocracy; and the greatest artists, to the despair of romantics, have always shone as brightly on absolute, or classical, standards as on any other. Moreover, it is a theory most opportune in this, that so far from nourishing pride, it inculcates humility—that prime necessity of our young to-day. To appreciate the highest we must ourselves be high, and there is no lift to wisdom. That is Mr. Belgion's meaning.

ORLO WILLIAMS.

SOCIAL BIOLOGY

Genetic Principles in Medicine and Social Science. By LANCELOT HOGBEN. Williams and Norgate. 15s.

What is popularly called Mendelism has made great strides during the present century. Animal genetics has been reduced to exact principles. There are difficulties to be overcome before human genetics can reach the same stage. In the study of the former the research worker can verify his hypotheses by experiment. Human society is not tractable material for the experimentalist. Man's matings are dictated by love, gold, place, power, propinquity, anything but genetic considerations. Even did they suit the book of the geneticist he could not wait long enough to see the results. The fruit fly gets through birth, marriage and death in eight days, but man's short span measured by the all too human biologist is all too long. Hence the writer on human genetics must obtain his information by less direct methods than those employed in the study of plants and animals.

But this is the least of his difficulties. The greatest is that in the absence of experiment he is prone to make assumptions that cannot be supported by anything like scientific evidence. When reputable biologists write with confidence of a genetic factor in the alleged superiority of an alleged Nordic race, of the dark-skinned peoples as vaguely "inferior" in a genetic sense, of the peculiar mentality inherent in the Mongolians and so on, the innocent reader cannot guess that there is no certain knowledge available on these questions. When they assume a simple genetic character for such complicated combinations of hereditary and environmental ingredients as produce feeble-mindedness, criminality and even pauperism, boldly confusing economic and biological factors to prove that the poor should be sterilised, the scientific mood has deserted them. Political bias, social prejudice, and ethical predilections, which have no conceivable connection with science, have fathered assumptions about the extent and the rate of selection which J. B. S. Haldane has shown by mathematical analysis to have no grounds. They have joined with ignorance to advocate the idiotic human stud-farm idea. They have filled the bookshelves of the world with a dead weight of hearsay, of sham expert opinion, and of doubtful conclusions based on sufficiently entertaining family histories illustrated by neat little genealogical trees. Except in the writings of some three or four people who are engaged in investigating the problems of human heredity in an objective and purely scientific manner, one looks in vain for a critical estimate, in all this mass of literature, of actual knowledge attained.

It was high time that some such book as Professor Hogben's *Genetic Principles* was written. With its help we may take stock. It is neither too modest nor too pretentious. It indicates the lines along which investigation can be, and is being, profitably pursued. It puts a curb on those who would with haste apply unverified results in scientific investigation to social problems. It is no grindstone for social and political axes. Sociologists, misled by partisan or ill-informed writers on human biology, may learn what material is available or likely to become available for application to social science. Medical men, to most of whom genetics is a science too recent for more than a nodding acquaintance, will welcome Professor Hogben's precise treatment of pathological inheritance. He puts into practice and demonstrates the utility of methods of genetic analysis which have been evolved only during the last few years and are now for the first time available in a work published in the English language. These new methods score in effecting a clear cut between the truly hereditary and the familial. Indeed they do more—but it is for the attentive reader of the book to master this new implement of research. Amongst the prime hindrances to the rigorous application of Mendelian principles to data afforded by pathology and serology has always been that of the smallness of the

human family. Professor Hogben has devised an ingenious technique for avoiding this source of error in the solution of genetical problems.

One thing emerges clearly from his examination and exposition of the principles of human genetics. It is the necessity for correlated investigation if anything of utility to society is to be obtained from a knowledge of the hereditary and environmental factors that modify human behaviour. Mendel was able to lay the foundations of the science tending his pea plants in his quiet monastery garden. Morgan and his colleagues, in their American laboratories, mapped the chromosomes of the fruit-fly little troubled by the affairs of the outside world. But before we come within the prospect of the chromosome map of Man, a busy corps of research workers, scrupulous and intelligent, must explore every avenue to the accumulation and pooling of quantities of accurate data, with whole cities for their laboratories and populations for their material. The mathematical analysis of these data on Mendelian principles will provide the seed for the growth of a real knowledge of human inheritance. Some grains derived from what is as yet available Professor Hogben has contributed in his book. Apart from this contribution to the harvest he has performed the inestimable service of separating the wheat of established and verifiable fact from the tares of ungrounded supposition that threaten to choke the goodly field of human genetics.

AMERICA IN PERSPECTIVE.

Prosperity: Myth and Reality in American Economic Life. By M. J. BONN. Martin Hopkinson. 7s. 6d.

Professor Bonn has written the wisest book on America that has been published in many years. He does not attempt, like M. Siegfried, the exclusion of complexity in the effort to prove a simple thesis. He sets out, with admirable lucidity, a clear and comprehensive picture of the whole American scene. If the book has a fault, it is its brevity; Professor Bonn is so tantalisingly suggestive that one often wishes that what is a hint might be developed into an argument. But no one who wants the real clue to the economic and social outlook of America to-day could find a better guide than these admirable pages.

The great virtue of Professor Bonn's exposition is its power to see the principles of American economic policy in terms of the social environment. And what, I think, emerges from his survey is that, despite all the differences between America and the old world, it is rapidly becoming a capitalistic society on the European model. There may be a greater volume of material resources. The standard of living may be higher. The barriers between classes may be less marked. But, despite these quantitative differences, nothing points in America to the emergence of a society inherently different in character from that of Europe.

A leisured class is in process of appearance. The little business man who made his way to the class of millionaires has no longer the opportunities of an older period. The spread of ownership does not carry with it the democratisation of economic control. The system has now become so vast and so intricate that its failure to work—as in the present depression—no longer merely calls into question the wisdom of its leaders; it calls into question the wisdom of the system itself. As Professor Bonn points out, most American crises in the past had a minor importance simply because the problems could be "surmounted by the rapid colonisation of a still richer farther West." To-day that West is occupied. America confronts the problems which have given life and vigour to the Socialist movement in Europe.

Professor Bonn remarks that violent upheaval is unlikely in America so long as the attack on capitalism comes only from below. Its people is optimistic; it is still deeply religious and intellectually conservative. But he makes one shrewd observation which it is worth while to record. "In the United States," he writes, "large sections of the population cling to the notion of a primitive natural law which has scant respect for legal forms and allows the individual to break the established law when the issues which he feels to be personal values seem to be threatened." That this spirit is widespread in America every serious observer will testify; it underlies not only things like the Ku Klux Klan, but many of the radical political and economic movements of the last century. Read its importance in the presence of wide intellectual discontent with the standards of American civilisation, and rapidly declining economic opportunity for the individual, and there emerges, as Professor Bonn insists, "a dissatisfaction with the whole system which is no longer mitigated by the hope that the mischief can be remedied by reforms." That is the secret of the immense fascination of the Russian experiment for the American mind. It appeals not only to the natural optimism of America; it satisfies the American impulse to create a vast tradition overnight. It is built on the technique which makes a supreme appeal to an America dominated by the notion that the future of the world is with the engineers. The Russian Communist who sees in the Five Year Plan the threshold of the Promised Land strikes a responsive note in the heart of the American Puritan to whom America would have been that land of Promise had not Mammon destroyed its prospects.

Were Russia, as Professor Bonn points out, to succeed on any considerable scale, its impression on America would be immense. The American would not know the cost of the experiment. He would only know that a planned economy gives work to all, that it is based on the mass-production he so largely invented, that the American mind is already prepared, by its experience of the standardised product, for transition to "a communist plan of economic distribution." It is significant, as he says, that toleration in America is rare, that the coercion of individual opinions does not evoke any wide protest. What would happen to America if Russian success were paralleled by a continued inability of American capital to maintain its wage-standards and to absorb its millions of unemployed? "The American political temperament," Professor Bonn writes, "is very much like the American climate, subject to sudden violent change."

I have touched upon one only of the many themes to which Professor Bonn draws attention. No one who knows America can doubt that it is on the verge of fundamental changes. The economic revolution of the last two decades is changing the very foundations of American ideology. Because the provincial period of American history is over, the impact of world-forces upon its habits will be greater and not less than in the past. No one since Tocqueville has written with greater insight than Professor Bonn of the directions through which that impact will be made.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

BEN JONSON'S APOTHEOSIS

Ben Jonson and King James. By ERIC LINKLATER. Cape. 10s. 6d.

History being as extraordinary as it is, since it testifies with every line and on every page to the prodigious diversity of human nature, why, in the name of literary discretion, must writers be perpetually embellishing it? Even its gaps often have their meaning; the fact that we know so little of our greatest dramatist is as significant as whole volumes of contemporary anecdote. Of Jonson we know just enough to make him real; his Scotch mother, his apprenticeship at war, his quarrels, his plays and his classic eminence—all build up into a wonderfully living portrait, which he completes by a few touches of autobiography. A bulky figure, both in person and in intellect; a figure we can examine from different angles, since he stands forth solidly three-dimensioned among companions slighter and more vapourish. . . . "Mountain belly," "rocky face," colossal learning—what has Mr. Linklater to add? In substance, it must be admitted, next to nothing. The only gift he brings with him is his enthusiasm; and that itself, though of most uncommon quality, is at times a somewhat hazardous advantage.

His enthusiasm no reader could deny. Mr. Linklater has obviously enjoyed his work and has the knack of communicating his enjoyment. A critic may protest, but he is carried along, pausing at last from sheer exhaustion. For what has the poet, after all, to do with this? Here is no biography, but a romance, a swashbuckling expedition into the picturesque, crammed full and running over with purple paragraphs in which the novelist splashes like a vintager, till he is up to the eyebrows in sanguine froth. If Mr. Linklater momentarily could feel dull, if there were one episode in his hero's life which did provoke him to a yeasty exuberance of amplification! . . . For example, Jonson's famous single combat, fought when he was campaigning in the Low Countries. A bare statement swells out into six pages. They are not bad sentences of their kind, and would do admirably were his avowed end romantic narrative:

> Now, then, armed with sword and dagger, he climbs out of the trench and stiffly walks to the bridge that spans, on boats, the

sluggish river. The pioneers (let us suppose) have but newly made it, so that the boards are still white between muddy footmarks and the edges are rough with splinter-prickles. There, on the bridge, Ben shouts again to the silent Knodsendrager. The pikemen on guard cheer him and laugh . . . The Dutchmen argue on the wall in broad and vehement outline. . . . And presently through a city gate the swordsman comes, very red and angry, with half the garrison behind him. They line one bank of the river and the English press forward on the other. On the bridge—it swings beneath them and the river chuckles to the anchored barges—Ben and the Dutchman stare at each other while each considers such things as his opponent's reach, how close his gorget fits, the look of his dagger-arm, and the uneasy boards underfoot.

They teach us that Mr. Linklater can write vividly, but they do not help us to an understanding of Ben Jonson. Nor do they illuminate his period. Life is always flattish for those who live it—even Mr. Linklater must sometimes nod—and to represent the Elizabethan Age, which, however romantic what it accomplished, had also its definitely prosiac side, as a mere prolonged excuse for verbal junketing, is to be false both to one's subject and to one's own talent. Mr. Linklater has a talent worth respect and a virtuosity sufficiently pronounced to deserve control. Some day he will throw aside the thyrsus. At all events, in his own words, "let us suppose. . . ."

THE SOVIET CHALLENGE

Bolshevism in Perspective. By J. DE V. LODER. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

The Conscription of a People. By THE DUCHESS OF ATHOLL, M.P. Philip Allan. 7s. 6d.

Is Soviet Trade a Menace? By W. P. COATES. Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee. 1s.

Here are two books, both by Conservative politicians, which are at one in their opposition to the Soviet regime. Otherwise, they differ as bread from mud. Captain Loder has paid two visits to Russia and studied men and things at close quarters—in Moscow and Leningrad, in the Urals and Siberia, the Caucasus and the Ukraine. Both his history of the Revolution and his account of the Five Year Plan are full of interest, though it is a pity that his latest view was in 1930, for a lot of water has flowed under the bridges since then. His criticisms of the Plan and the planners are candid and fair, even if one does not always agree with them. He makes no secret of his dislike of Communist theory and practice. But he gives the devil his due; he does not set out to impute only the basest motives; he makes allowances for difficulties; he does not fall into the error of judging Russians as though they were Britons; and he warns the fanatics of his own party that "to treat Bolshevism as if it were a temporary attack of lunacy is entirely to misread the situation." He sees Bolshevism as a challenge to Western civilisation, but not as a purely destructive force. And the policy which this country should adopt towards the Soviet Government, he thinks, should be one not of outright hostility but of accommodation.

The Duchess of Atholl thinks otherwise. She wants action, international action, and quick action, against these monsters who have enslaved their own people and are selling goods too cheap to ours. The Duchess has not been to Russia herself; she builds up her case from official documents and decrees, newspapers, the statements of escaped prisoners and renegade Communists. And the result is an astounding hotchpotch of fact and fancy—and a picture of Russia about as credible as would be a picture of England drawn by a Communist in Moscow who saw us through the spectacles of the *Daily Worker*, who concentrated on wage-cuts, unemployment, slums and crimes, who always put the most sinister interpretation on the decisions of Parliament and the actions of ministries. There are many things to deplore or condemn in the Communist dictatorship; but so sweeping an indictment as this will defeat its own end. Convict labour, forced labour, industrial conscription, agricultural conscription, trickery, terror, hunger—these are the regular methods, we are told, by which the Five Year Plan is run. In the timber camps, on the farms, in the mines, the workers are brutally handled, and in the factories, we are to believe, they are cowed by "the presence of armed guards." Nobody who had been in Russia for twenty minutes would indulge in such wholesale exaggeration. As Captain Loder says: "Although the individual has not the same freedom to dispose of his labour as in this country, it is going too far to describe labour generally as forced." Those who want to know what is really happening in the U.S.S.R., what is good and what is bad, what is in the minds of rulers and of subjects, will not get much enlightenment from the Duchess of Atholl.

Mr. Coates's brochure provides an answer to some of the charges made against the Soviet Government. In particular it deals with timber and grain. It offers substantial evidence to show that forced labour and prison labour are not used in the export timber trade, and that the allegations of dumping, whether of wood or of wheat, are hollow. Mr. Coates occasionally lays himself open to criticism—as when, e.g., he chides Mr. Baldwin for saying (in March, 1931) that Russia sells to us four or five times as much as she buys from us. This is inaccurate, he declares, for the total value of our imports from, and our exports to, Russia in the years 1921–30 was £192,650,353 and £92,216,244, respectively. Quite so—for the period of ten years. But the figures in 1928 were: imports, £21,500,000; exports, under £5,000,000; for 1929, imports, £26,500,000; exports, £6,500,000; for 1930, imports, £34,250,000; exports, £9,300,000. But it is absurd, of course, to use this adverse balance as an argument for a boycott of Russia, and on the main point Mr. Coates makes out his case. Neither in the intention of the Soviet Government nor in actual fact is Anglo-Russian trade a menace to this country. And there seems no reason why it ever should be so, if hatred and fear cease to be made the basis of policy.

LANDOR

The Complete Works of Walter Savage Landor. Edited by T. EARLE WELBY. Chapman & Hall. 30s. per vol.

The twelfth volume of Mr. Earle Welby's magnificent edition of Landor is out. It is a work which we needed; there was no complete edition of this most unfailing master of English prose. Foster's edition and that published by Dent were not complete, and they were out of print. Mr. Welby and his publishers have undertaken a service for which literary men are grateful; all the more unselfish because after the first volumes of such a work have appeared little notice is usually taken of it as it progresses. We wanted a complete Landor printed as his clear and massive prose should be printed.

It is true that Landor was a most voluminous writer and yet that the nature of his contribution is such that human nature requires only a little Landor. The way to enjoy him is to read him (not to be done without sighs and groans of impatience), to mark the passages which appeal to us and, having thus made our own anthology, to re-read him again and again. He is among authors an example of that rare phenomenon—a great writer with a limited mind and heart. We watch an unmatched literary faculty working often in a vacuum. In this volume there are pages upon pages of magnificent emphasis with nothing behind them. At the end of *Popery: British and Foreign* we are none the wiser; nor is it conceivable that the ten letters addressed to Cardinal Wiseman could have influenced him in the smallest degree. Every sentence is a triumph of clarity, grace and sonority; every page an example of ineffective statement. Yet (to the literary) the reward of reading the unreadable is in Landor's case great. He comes again and again upon some expression—a phrase, a sentence—which gives him pure pleasure. "We often hear that such and such a thing is not worth an old song. Alas! how very few things are!" Landor was an old man when he wrote those words; they express a sensibility which he preserved to his ninetieth year. If, like Swinburne, who is another example of the literary faculty developed out of all proportion to qualities of mind and heart behind the written page, Landor remained, as a thinker, a crude youth, he also never dried up. Whenever, and it is often, *à propos de bottes* he turns to books, he writes memorable comments: "Gibbon is worthy of a name among the most enlightened and eloquent of the ancients. I find no fault with his language; on the contrary, I find the most exact propriety. The grave, and somewhat austere, becomes the historian of the Roman Republic; the grand, and somewhat gorgeous, finds its proper place in the palace of Byzantium." How well the following phrase describes our sensations in reading certain authors: "We are at once slumberous and restless under the heaviness of musk and benzoin, and sigh for the unattainable insipidity of fresh air." The well-nigh unreadable portions of Landor are sprinkled with such things.

SHORTER NOTICES

Rifleman and Hussar. By COL. SIR PERCIVAL MARLING, Bt., V.C. Murray. 18s.

Reminiscences are only acceptable from those who can write or those who definitely cannot, from those who cook their memories to a turn or those who serve them raw upon a charger. The author of the present delightful volume may be assigned without hesitation to the second group. His military career began in 1880, and four years later he was awarded the V.C. His account of how he won that decoration is a little lesson in self-revealing modesty. Next day he ordered his men to "wang a volley" into moribund Fuzzywuzzies on the battlefield, and made a "glorious blaze" of, after "thoroughly looting," a rebel village. Altogether a refreshing record of a past age, which seems almost as remote as that of Marlborough.

Modern South America. By C. W. DOMVILLE FIFE. Seeley Service. 21s.

The Struggle for South America: Economy and Ideology. By J. F. NORMANO. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

Mr. Domville Fife in his present study of South America puts under contribution his earlier books, and has gathered his facts from many sources. In the main his work is descriptive, and if at times he is apt to be a little florid, his descriptions are vivid and convincing, and he makes us understand something of the vast resources of the continent, which, were they fully developed, would indeed make the present century "the century of South America" as Roosevelt once declared it would be. Mr. Normano, Brazilian born, but trained in economic thought in Europe and the United States, approaches the States of Latin America as an economist, and from that point of view discusses the pre-war, war, and post-war attitude of Europe and the U.S.A. to the question of South America's commerce and finance. His work is distinguished from the usual commercial analysis by the emphasis he places upon the importance of psychological factors in dealing with the various States. He writes as an American, but he has a sound knowledge of European methods, and his criticism of British and other commercial methods in South America generally, and Brazil in particular, deserves the attention of our merchants, manufacturers and financiers.

About Motoring

HANDLING THE CAR IN WINTER

AT this season of the year the average owner damages his car considerably through sheer ignorance. His first crime may be exemplified from my own vehicle. Its engine will invariably start in five seconds at a touch of the switch with the strangler pulled right out. If I leave the strangler out, I can immediately drive it into the road, and it will not choke or misfire if I keep the strangler in operation for two or three minutes; by that time the induction system has warmed up sufficiently to function properly with the strangler pushed back. Many owners habitually employ the strangler to this extent and so drench the piston and cylinder with wet, unvaporised fuel for several minutes after each start from cold. They pay the penalty by owning a noisy car after 10,000 miles, when this maltreatment will make reboring and new pistons an æsthetic necessity. The wet fuel washes the oil off the pistons and cylinder walls, and accelerates wear. If an owner has the patience to push his strangler in as soon as the engine fires, keep a finger on the knob, and pull it out repeatedly for a tenth of a second at a time when the engine threatens to stop, his pistons and cylinder walls will remain oily, and should not require attention for 50,000 miles instead of 10,000.

Common sense is equally required in the use of the shutters or radiator muff. The better cars have shutters, operated by a thermostat, which open automatically when the cooling water attains a good temperature, but this refinement cannot be fitted as standard to a cheap car. If the car has hand-controlled shutters, the shutters should be kept closed until the radiator thermometer registers 80° or so; if no thermometer is supplied, one should be fitted. It does not pay to drive a car with the engine unnecessarily cool; for the oil will not circulate properly nor can the carburetter function accurately; and the latter trouble will feed wet fuel to the cylinders, just as excessive strangling does. If the car has no shutters, its owner probably uses a muff with a buttoned blind over the radiator, and this accessory is comparatively tiresome, since the owner should start his drives with the radiator covered, and stop the car to drop the blind as soon as the thermometer registers 80° or so.

No radiator muff is a real safeguard against freezing in bitter weather. If the radiator leaks or otherwise loses water, the use of anti-freezing mixture becomes expensive. But with a tight water-cooling system and an engine which keeps reasonably cool, some such non-freezing chemical as that supplied by Price's should be inserted in the radiator on October 1st, and kept there until April 1st. It will absolutely prevent freezing of the water system; but it does not eliminate the usefulness of a muff, which assists the owner in raising an efficient running temperature as rapidly as possible.

Gear-changing is often affected by very cold weather. While the car is standing in the garage, the lubricant in the gear box becomes congealed by cold, and the changing methods which work perfectly in summer will create scrapes and noises in December, as the shafts will stop much more quickly when the clutch is withdrawn. This petty annoyance is easily solved by double-clutching on upward changes as well as on downward changes. In this mode of double-clutching, the throttle is not opened, as in downward changes, and the sequence is simply—1, release accelerator; 2, declutch; 3, move gear lever to neutral; 4, re-engage clutch; 5, declutch; 6, move gear lever to next higher gear; 7, re-engage clutch.

Skidding is mercifully unusual with any modern car even in winter, except when absurdly fast cornering is attempted; but this particular danger is greater in winter than in summer, and reaches its zenith on frozen roads filmed with light moisture. It may be countered by driving more slowly, and especially by cornering more slowly. But the tyres should all have pronounced patterns. Covers which are worn smooth should be renewed, and their remaining mileage should be used up in summer when the roads are better. Above all, the tyres should be properly inflated. An observant owner need hardly use a tyre gauge. He can detect a flabby tyre by the pull on the steering wheel if one front tyre is slightly down; by the increased heaviness of the steering if both front tyres are down; and by the tendency to skid corners, possibly with tyre squeal, if one or both rear tyres are down. Fully inflated tyres bite through films of grease to the hard surface beneath; soft tyres flatten and slide.

The accumulators on a modern car seldom last more than two years, and the brevity of their life is almost invariably due to

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overwork during the cold months. In winter they do not receive the full charging provided by long daylight runs in summer. They face much harder work in starting an engine with gummy oil films between all its moving parts; and the headlamps are probably in daily use. Their life can be prolonged by avoiding excessive use of the starter. If the engine does not start on the switch within five seconds, the owner should discover the reason. He may be mishandling his strangler and carburettor; or his plugs may need cleaning, resetting of the gaps, or if the car is old, renewal. Possibly he is using too thick an oil, which offers such resistance to the rotation of the engine that a brand new accumulator could not start it quickly, even if it is in perfect tune. A thinner brand of oil is essential in winter, and the makers of the car can probably recommend a grade or a brand which is very nearly non-gumming. If the engine is still a sluggish starter, the owner should always commence his starting operations by turning or pulling over the crankshaft several times on the handle before he resorts to the electric starter. This can be done with the ignition switched off in perfect safety; its sole purpose is to shear the oil films. If the owner undertakes no long runs in winter, his outraged accumulators can hardly avoid misuse. They will be perpetually furnishing current for the starter and the lamps, and receive no adequate charging. Under such conditions they should be charged up at a power station whenever the car is spending an idle day; such a charge, administered once a month, will add many working hours to their life. It costs a few shillings, but the reconditioning of a big accumulator may cost £10, so that the money is an economy.

Unless the car is regularly cleaned in winter, it should start the winter with a thorough wash, and be finished off with one of the semi-permanent wax polishes, which will protect the delicate enamel from the corrosive effects of damp and dirt and grease. Since winter roads carry a good deal of surface water, the chassis bearings should be fully charged with grease. This is best performed at a service station, where a power grease gun will force out the stale lubricant and pack every bush with grease so completely that water will be excluded. This attention should be repeated whenever the car has been driven through flood-water.

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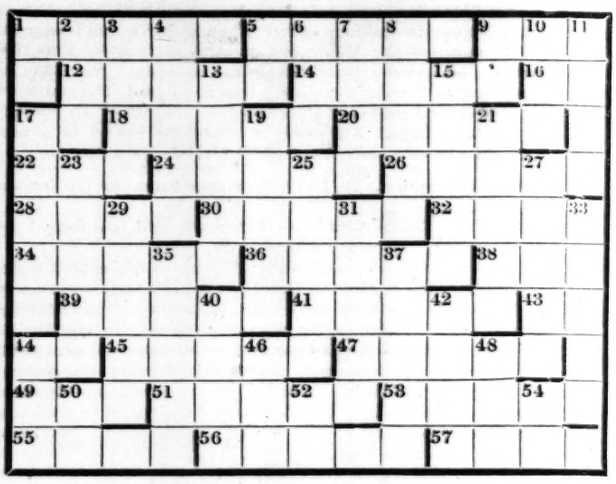
Playtime

TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



PENTADS

ACROSS.

1. A stone is an inadequate substitute.
5. The yeast must have gone to my head.
9. The lily becomes secret.
12. Lancashire tells the tale.
14. Tell it to roll back, Mr. Poet.
16 *rev.* Emblematic after 54.
17. Imperial after 54.
18. Snatch.
20 *rev.* Essential in the best farces.
22. See 32.
24. Shaw says they do this who can't.
26. Indicator of time at Kew.
28. There's inanity in numbers.
30. Tree without thickness.
32. With 22, we run around in Minnesota.
34. Cain's let loose in South America.
36. Gertrude just gibbers.
38. Weapon of Mr. Capone's.
39. Framework reduced to cinders.
41. Half in the soup.
43. With 5 *dn.*, chest-protectors.
44. Letters have been written for my sake.
45. Between tacks.
47 *rev.* My ghost ran for a long time.
49. Employment of a twisted street.
51. Confusion on the day of judgment.
53. Straightforward twist.
55. My herd is not always me.
56. Experience in an inexpensive form.
57. Returned plunder has its uses.

DOWN.

1. Honorific after 54.
2. Proposed scene of promiscuous osculation.
3. Appurtenance of 2.
4, 17. You won't find much of me in the Book of Numbers.
5. See 43.
6. This one is Barrie's.
7. Eruption.
8. I was baked with 23 others.
9, 10. All God's chillun are.
11. Guns.
13. Our tops are tasty.
15. A corner in money.
17. See 4.
19. Sham blue Danube?
21. See 31.
23. Habitat of brushwood boy.
25. There's none here.
27. You haven't got the whole.
29. The races give one a fright.
31. I deal, not with the dead, but with the living.
33 *rev.* Port, old but not tawny.
35, 37. None of your poisons for me.
40. Massa says I's superfluous.
42. An "absolute" sitter.
44. Unfashionable form of humour.
46. Libellous, according to Cocker.
48. Method of catching a crab.
50. Resentful in N.Y. after 9 *dn.*
52. Considerable in N.Y. after 9 *dn.*
54. See 16, 17, 1 *dn.*

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS.—1. Massachusetts ("Blue" laws: R. Browning). 14. octopus. 15. red-oem. 16. remain *rev.* 17. atabal. 19. odi (Ido). 20. Wilson *rev.* 22. Omer (more). 23. curious (*Iolanthe*). 24. cent. 26. pa. 27. hits. 29. eas(ed) *rev.* 30. ghee. 31. rate (two meanings). 32. calo *rev.* 34. Druod. 36. (R)otarian. 37. eau. 39. pni (bent pin). 40. solem(n) *rev.* 41. heap. 42. hcin (chin). 43. tide *rev.* 44. meretric(ious).

DOWN.—1. monochrome. 2. acidulated. 3. Stair. 4. somnifero(us). 5. ape. 6. cursus. 7. slash *rev.* 8. urticaceae (the nettle family: *Henry V.*). 9. seaweed. 10. -ed. 11. team (mate). 12. telephonic. 13. smaragdine. 18. bone. 21. too *rev.* 25. teopei (poetic). 28, 32. italicism. 29. saner (snare). 33. lane. 35. Ruhr. 38. apt (Pat).

LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE.

The fly covers 48 miles.

The point of the puzzle is that the distance the fly travels can be quickly arrived at from a calculation of his flying time.

A number of correct solutions have reached me.

THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE

A family party, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Jones, and Mr. and Mrs. Robinson, make up two tables at bridge. Robinson plays with his daughter. Brown plays against his mother. Jones plays with his sister. Mrs. Smith plays against her mother. Brown and his partner have the same mother. Smith plays with his mother-in-law

Who partners whom, and how are the two tables made up?

CALIBAN.

COMPANY MEETING.

CARRERAS, LTD.

The twenty-eighth annual general meeting of Carreras, Ltd., was held on December 18th at Arcadia Works, London, N.W.

Sir Louis B. Baron, Bt. (chairman and managing director), in the course of his speech, said: The net profit amounts to £736,192. Although this is lower than in some recent years, we made as much gross profit as in the last year.

We continue to keep a very strong position in practically all our export markets, and I believe that, as soon as the readjustment of world conditions takes effect, and things get back to normal again, we will be able, not only to maintain our position, but to show progress. Turning to the Home trade, despite difficult conditions and intensive competition, we have been able to stand up against heavy odds, and retain the goodwill both of the public and the trade, while we have employed our entire staff of contented workpeople at full wages throughout the whole year. This could not have been achieved were it not for the popularity and high quality of our products. It is pleasant to be able to record that our brands are holding their own, in spite of the fact that within the last two months the consumption of tobacco and cigarettes for the country generally, according to the Board of Trade returns, has shown a steady decline, as compared with last year.

In September last the Chancellor of the Exchequer increased the duty on tobacco by 8d. per lb., and we now have to pay 9s. 6d. per lb. for all the tobacco we clear from bond—a very heavy rate indeed. This increase of 8d. per lb., so far as cigarettes are concerned, has been borne entirely by us and other manufacturers; it was in operation for about six weeks of the financial year under review, and has, of course, contributed to the increase of our costs and the reduction of our profits. This extra burden has had to be shouldered by our company, in common with others, during the current year, and as this, in my opinion, is the limit of taxation which the industry can stand, it is to be hoped that this extra duty will be one of the first to be removed when the finances of the country begin to recover from their present embarrassed state.

Within the last three months we have entered a new field in the Cigarette world, with a brand of the "5 for 2d." standard. It is called Carreras' "Clubs" I am pleased to tell you that our anticipations as to the figures we expected to reach have been surpassed. We are offering a cigarette of such excellent value that, having regard to its price, quality, size, and general get-up, your directors have every confidence in the eventual results.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

CANADIAN CLUB
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Navy Cut · Flake · Curly Cut · Mixture and Rough Cut

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Grown next door to Virginia in America's sunniest spot

11½D. per oz. **for 2 ozs. 1/10**

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DON'T LET THE LIFE-BOAT SINK FOR WANT OF YOUR HELP.

To maintain the whole Life-boat Service this year we need
1,000,000
Contributions of 5/- each. We have received up to date
612,435
Of this sum we received last week
3,176.

WE MUST GET 387,565 MORE BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. WILL YOU BE "ONE IN A MILLION" AND SEND 5/- TO-DAY.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY, *Honorary Treasurer.* LIEUT.-COL. C. R. SATTERTHWAITE, O.B.E., *Secretary.*

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Treasury rating not exceeding	Value including Accessories not exceeding	C.I.S. Premiums. Provincial.	C.I.S. Premiums. Metropolitan Area*	"Tariff" Premiums
H.P.	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
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9	200	9 10 0	11 7 6	12 2 6
12	200	10 17 6	12 0 0	12 12 6
15	300	13 12 6	14 15 0	15 12 6
20	450	15 10 0	16 7 6	17 10 0

**These premiums apply only to cars used or garaged within 15 miles radius of Charing Cross.*

N.B.—Irish risks are rated specially and are subject to certain restrictions.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR.

REPUDIATION OR INFLATION—WRECKING THE LONDON PASSENGER TRANSPORT BILL—HECTOR AND THE WHALE

IT is insulting to wish the investor a Happy Christmas. He will be looking back on a year of rapidly declining business with the consciousness that next year international trade may be brought completely to a standstill if the German financial problem is not handled skilfully. He will be recalling the past twelve months' record on the Stock Exchanges—a persistent and merciless writing down of security values broken only by brief spells of false optimism in New York—with the expectation that fresh low levels will be reached in 1932 when taxpayers are being pressed to realise their last remaining savings for the sake of balancing an unbalanceable Budget. If he is cynically minded, he may derive some morbid pleasure from the realisation that the only remedy proposed for a banking crisis on the Continent is to "stand still," the only protection suggested for a country ruined by the collapse in international trade is the erection of higher tariff walls against trade in general, and the only hope conceived of for the investor is that the security markets will sooner or later be supported by "bears" who have over-sold. Nevertheless, I think I can detect the gleaming of a faint light on the horizon which may herald the dawning of a better day. The City Editor of the *Times* has become an inflationist. The leader writers in the *Financial News* and the *Investors' Chronicle* have become repudiationists. When these organs of respectability begin to play revolutionary airs there is surely hope for mankind.

* * *

The *Times* rightly calls attention to the fact that since 1920 all money debts (in gold) have been multiplied by three as a result of the fall in commodity prices. "When the debtor is divested of everything he possesses," it writes, "then the creditor suffers. . . . It is therefore in the interests of both creditors and debtors that something should be done to lighten the burden of debts by bringing about a rise in prices." A little naive, but at last the truth has dawned. The *Investors' Chronicle*, expressing, I believe, the predominant City view, declares that repudiation of political debts (war debts and reparations) is preferable to repudiation of commercial debts, which would be the death-blow to the whole capitalist system. If the Government of the United States insists on payment of European war debts while German reparations are suspended, a European default next July is inevitable. American Senators unfortunately lack a sense of realism. The *Financial News*, writing round its slogan "No reparations, no war debts," declares in favour of "saying at once what every competent authority both in Europe and in America knows must inevitably be said very soon." On the whole I am looking forward to 1932. A default in July may be followed by a trade boom in September.

* * *

Opposition to the London Passenger Transport Bill is blowing up into a storm. There is no attempt to disguise the scandalous nature of the attack. It is argued that the shareholders of the Underground group agreed to the Bill because they were told by Lord Ashfield that the late Labour Government would impose far more objectionable conditions if they refused consent. In other words, having agreed under pressure of political blackmail [*sic*], the shareholders are now advised to denounce the agreement because political blackmail can be exerted in the reverse direction. I admit that the Metropolitan Railway always opposed the Bill very strenuously—I could never see why a London Passenger Transport Board should concern itself with administering country estates in "Metroland" or with nursing the white elephant of Chiltern Court—and if their claim to be treated in the same way as the main-line railway companies is granted (their London suburban services being pooled with the rest but their independence otherwise untouched) I do not think much harm will be done. But when Thomas Tillings raise their voice against the Bill for the first time (as far as I know) and in a lengthy memorandum for the press invite every party to the Bill to go back on a compromise which was reached after months of patient negotiation, I think it is time to protest. What new objections can be put forward which the Committee of the House has not already considered? Thomas Tillings argue that the proposed Board will have a monopoly, that the members of the Board will be in a weak position in dealing with wage demands, that the removal of competition will tend to stagnat of enterprise, that the combine will be too large for efficie and that there will be a risk of increased fares. All these the stock objections raised to a scheme described as the grea socialistic enterprise ever placed before the country. They were considered and rejected because the chaotic conditions of London transport and the congestion of London streets simply could not be left to the hazards of private enterprise.

* * *

The serious part of Thomas Tillings' case is the attempt to frighten the ordinary shareholders of the Underground out of their bargain on the grounds (1) that since the pound sterling is no longer anchored to gold their acceptance of the fixed interest "C" stock exposes them to the risk of a diminution in real income, and (2) that since the amount of stock to be issued has been increased by further allotments to the L.C.C., and since the cost of petrol has risen, the estimates of Sir William McLintock are upset and the earnings of the proposed Board will no longer be sufficient to meet the interest requirements. This latter argument cuts both ways. If the enhanced cost of motor f (the price of petrol is expected to be raised in the New Year 1d. or 2d. per gallon because the depreciation in sterling increased the cost of oil imported from the gold-standard countries) cannot be passed on to the traveller by bus, so that the bus companies' profits will suffer, the "equity" shareholders of the Underground and Thomas Tillings, if they remain independent, will bear the full brunt of the slump. In fact, if there is any risk of a sharp rise in petrol prices, they will be foolish not to come within the fold of the London Traffic Combine, where they tap a "pool," the receipts of which are swelled by the tubes and tramways. I would advise shareholders of both Underground and Thomas Tillings, faced with a decline in public travelling by bus and a rise in the running costs of their bu companies, to demand an early passage for the London Pas senger Transport Bill. The market prices of Underground and Thomas Tillings' ordinary shares and of the Income Debentur of the London General Omnibus Company (which will also profit by the Bill) are as follows :—

	High, 1931.	Present Price.	Divs. %	Div. Yield %
Thomas Tilling, £1	80/7½	48/9	if20	8.21
			if15	6.15
Underground Electric Rlys., £1 ..	24/10½	19/1½	*	8.10
London General Omnibus, 5% Income Deb.	98½	93½ free	†	5.43

* It is officially estimated that if the London Transport Bill becomes law, a holder of 100 shares will receive (*a*) £115 Transport "C" Stock entitled to 5% dividend for two years and thereafter, subject to certain provisions, 6% and (*b*) a share in other assets estimated to produce a further £2 per annum.

† Under the Bill this stock will become Transport "B" stock—a trustee security carrying 5% interest.

* * *

Every Christmas the directors of the Hector Whaling Compan provide their shareholders with a report which, between the lines, may be read as a modern edition of the parable of Jo and the Whale. This Company went a-whaling last seas without having sold its catch forward. The ships returned hon and the oil went into storage, for the market had dried up Meanwhile, the price of whale oil fell by per cent. to £12 10s per ton (nominal), and the writing down of the stocks to this figure—the lot valued at £531,672 in the accounts just issued involved the Company in a loss of £228,815. So with a bank overdraft of £17,818, bills payable and creditors (less debtors of £430,000, not to mention £214,100 of 7 per cent. Secured Notes the Company is feeling as strained as any Central European bank. So the Whale has again swallowed up Hector. The ships are being laid up this season in company with all whaling fleets except those of Unilever and one independent company. The surplus stocks of whale oil have been pooled and about a third I understand, has now been sold at £15 per ton. It is unfor tunate that the whaling companies are so dependent upon the custom of Unilever, seeing that it is in the interests of Unilever to keep the price of whale oil down. But they have only themselves to blame, for they should never have enlarged their fleets and despatched them to the whaling waters last season when a surplus was already staring them in the face. Meanwhile the shareholders of Hector go without their dividends and their shares are unsaleable. Their only comforting thought is that if their whale oil were sold at £15 per ton, it would pay off all floating liabilities and the Secured Notes (now valued at 80 p cent. in the market) and leave a whaling fleet unencumbered The trouble is that whale oil does not keep so well in storage tanks as it does in the whale's belly.

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m., unless otherwise stated.

ADELPHI. GRAND HOTEL. Wed. & Sat.

ALDWYCH. TURKEY TIME. Wed., Fri. & Sat.

APOLLO. THERE'S ALWAYS JULIET. Th., S., M.

CAMBRIDGE. ELIZABETH of ENGLAND. Th.,S.

GLOBE. AND SO TO BED. Wed. & Sat.

HIPPODROME. BOW BELLS. Daily 2.30.

LYRIC. AUTUMN CROCUS. Wed. & Sat.

PHŒNIX. COUNSEL'S OPINION. Wed., Sat., 2.30.

QUEEN'S. BARRETTS OF WIMPOLE ST. W. & S.

ST. MARTIN'S. Sat., Tu. & Fri.
THE NELSON TOUCH.

STRAND. IT'S A GIRL. Thurs. & Sats.

WESTMINSTER. THE ANATOMIST. Sat.

WHITEHALL. THE GAY ADVENTURE. W., S.

WYNDHAM'S. Sats., & Mon., Dec. 28.
THE CASE OF THE FRIGHTENED LADY.

THEATRES

ADELPHI. Tem. 7611. 8.15 sharp. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
GRAND HOTEL.
A play by VICKI BAUM.
Adapted by EDWARD KNOBLOCK.

ALDWYCH. Tem. Bar 6404.
Nightly at 8.15. Mats., Wed., Fri. & Boxing Day, 2.30.
TURKEY TIME.
Mary Brough and RALPH LYNN.

APOLLO. 8.30. Th., Sat., & 28 Dec., 2.30.
THERE'S ALWAYS JULIET.
A Comedy, by JOHN VAN DRUTEN.
ANNA BEST. HERBERT MARSHALL.

CAMBRIDGE. 8.30. Thur., Sat., & 28 Dec., 2.30.
PHYLLIS NEILSON-TERRY and MATHESON LANG in
ELIZABETH OF ENGLAND.

COLISEUM. Charing Cross. Tem. Bar 3161.
Sir Oswald Stoll presents
ERIK CHARELL'S
WHITE HORSE INN.
Daily at 2.30 and 8.15.

GLOBE. EVGS., 8.30. Mats., Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
YVONNE ARNAUD in
AND SO TO BED.
A Comedy by JAMES B. FAGAN. (Gerrard 8724).

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TWICE DAILY at 2.30 & 8.15.
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WHERE THE RAINBOW ENDS.
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LYRIC. Evenings, 8.15. Mats., Wed. and Sat., 2.30.
Isobel Elsom, Francis Lederer, in
AUTUMN CROCUS.
"An Enchanting Play."—*Evening News.* Ger. 3686.

PHŒNIX. 8.30. Thurs. & Sat., 2.30. Smoking.
COUNSEL'S OPINION.
OWEN NARES, ISABEL JEANS.
ALLAN AYNESWORTH. MORTON SELTEN.

QUEEN'S. GER. 9437. LAST 2 WEEKS.
Evgs. (excl. Xmas Eve), 8.15. Mats., Wed., Sat., 2.30.
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2nd YEAR. LONDON'S LONGEST RUN.
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A CHILD'S IDEA FOR CHILDREN.
A delightful NEW play in five entrancing scenes. Sam and Barbara, the Zoo Polar Bears, escape to Fairyland, meeting Pirates and Red Indians and reach the North Pole. POPULAR PRICES.
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ST. MARTIN'S. Temple Bar 1443. Evgs., 8.30.
THE NELSON TOUCH.
By NEIL GRANT.
Matinees, Saturday, Tuesday & Friday, 2.30.

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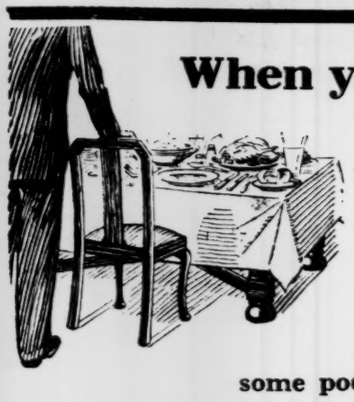

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A FLOWER PIECE

THE blackthorn tree stooped over the high bank above the road. Its branches were clouded with white blossom and the spring sunlight threw lace-like patterns on the earth that had been trodden bare underneath the tree. The grass of the bank was scattered with big, pale-blue violets and stars of coltsfoot and daisies very like chance blackthorn blossoms that the wind had shaken down. In the hedge behind the blackthorn were companies of pale green lords and ladies thrusting up their unfurled hoods through a thicket of dog's-mercury. They looked cold and stately. The sunlight was sharp and brilliant, and against the blue of the sky the blackthorn tree was whiter than a summer cloud.

On the road below stood a row of cottages and in the back gardens wives were beating carpets and gossiping. A clergyman rode by on a bicycle, carrying the *Times* and a bunch of daffodils. A black-bird squawked and dipped across the road and vanished into a spinney of hazels as he passed.

A girl of seven or eight was sitting under the blackthorn. The tree was so twisted and stooping that she sat there in a kind of room, shut in by a roof and walls of blossoming branches. It was very sweet and snug there on the dry floor in the freckling sunlight. She had taken off her pinafore and had spread it across the earth and had set in the centre of it a tin that had once held peaches. In the tin she was arranging flowers among ivy-leaves and grasses. She had put in celandines and dog-violets and coltsfoot and a single dandelion, with a spray or two of blackthorn. She arched her fingers very elegantly and sat back to admire her effects. She had fair, smooth hair and she had made a daisy-chain to bind round her forehead. It gave her a very superior and lady-like air which was not lost on her.

Presently she ceased arranging the flowers and began to smooth her dress and polish her finger-nails on her palms, lingering over them for a long time. At last there was a movement in a hawthorn-bush a little distance away and a voice called quietly :

" Do I have to come in now? "

The girl looked up in the direction of the voice.

" You have to wait till I tell you," she whispered sharply.

And then in a totally strange voice, very high-pitched and affected, like the voice of a stage duchess, she sang out :

" I'm at my toilet, my dear. An awful nuisance. Do excuse me."

" I see."

" Only a moment ! I'm still in my dissabilly."

She began to make hurried imaginary movements of slipping in and out of garments. Finally she undid two buttons at the bodice of her dress and turned back the neck, revealing her naked chest. She looked down at herself in admiration, breathing heavily once or twice, so that her bosom rose and fell very languidly and softly. She gave one last touch to the flowers in the peach-tin and then whispered :

" You can come in now. Act properly."

Another child came out of hiding and stood outside the blackthorn tree. She was a brown, shy, unassuming creature, about six or seven, with beautiful dark eyes that reflected the dazzling whiteness of the sloe-blossom so perfectly that they took fresh light from it. Her voice was curiously soft and timid and whispering.

" Do I have to come straight in? " she said.

" You have to be in the garden first. You look at the flowers and then you ring and the servant comes."

" Oh ! what lovely may," said the other child, talking softly to herself.

" It's not may ! It's lilac."

" Oh ! what lovely lilac. Oh ! dear, what lovely lilac."

She pulled down a branch of blossom and caressed it with her cheek. It was very sweet, and she sighed. She acted very charmingly, and finally she rang the bell and the servant came.

" May I see Mrs. Lane? "

" Not Mrs. Lane," came an awful whisper. " Lady Constance. You're Mrs. Lane."

" Oh ! Is Lady Constance in? "

" Will you go into the drawing-room? "

She stooped and went through a space in the blackthorn branches. The fair child for a moment did not notice her. She had broken off a thorn and she was absorbed in stitching imaginary embroideries very delicately. Suddenly she glanced up with a most perfect exclamation of well-mannered surprise.

" My dear Mrs. Lane ! It is Mrs. Lane, isn't it? "

" Yes."

" How sweet of you to come. Won't you sit down? I'll ring for tea. You must be tired. Ting-a-ling-a-ling ! Oh ! Jane, will you bring tea at once, please? Thank you. Oh ! do sit down, won't you? "

" Where do I sit? " said the brown child.

" On the floor, silly ! " whispered the fair girl. " Oh ! do take the settee, won't you? "

" I was admiring your lovely may," said the brown child.

" The lilac? Oh ! yes, wouldn't you like to take some? "

" Oh ! yes. May I? "

She began to crawl through the break in the branches again. Instantly the fair child was furious.

" You don't have to do that until I tell you," she whispered. " Come back and sit down now. Oh ! yes, of course," she said aloud. " I'll tell the gardener to cut you some."

The brown-eyed child crept back under the tree and sat down. She looked very meek and solemn and embarrassed, as though she were really in a drawing-room and did not know what to do with her hands. The fair child was acting superbly, not one accent or gesture out of place. The maid arrived with the tea and the fair one said with perfect sweetness:

" Milk and sugar? "

The dark child had become busy with hidden knots, her frock uplifted, and she did not hear. The fair-haired child took one look at her and became furious again.

" Put your clothes down," she whispered terribly. " You're showing all you've got."

" I can't help it. It's my knickers. I want some new elastic."

" But you mustn't do it. Not in the drawing-room. We're ladies ! "

" But ladies do it."

" Ladies don't do it ! Ladies have to sit nice and talk

nice and behave themselves. Why can't you act properly? "

The brown-eyed child surrendered. She looked as though she were bored and bewildered by the affectations of the fair child and by the prospect of being a lady. She was constantly glancing with an expression of quiet longing at the blackthorn blossom, the blue sky and the flowers arranged in the peach-tin.

" Milk and sugar? " repeated the fair child.

" Oh! yes, please."

There were no tea-cups, but the fair child had gathered a heap of stones for cakes. The brown child sat with a stone in her hand. The other took a cake between her finger-tips and made elegant bites and munched with a sweetish smile. She made small talk to perfection, and when she drank her tea she extended her little finger. Finally she observed that the dark child was neither eating nor drinking. She looked at her as if she had committed a thousand unpardonable sins in etiquette.

" Aren't you having any tea?" she said, icily.

The brown-eyed child looked startled and then declared timidly:

" I don't want to play this game."

" Why don't you want to play? "

The brown child did not answer. All the dignity of the fair child at once vanished. She made a gesture as though it were difficult to bear all the shortcomings of the younger child.

" All because you can't act," she said tartly.

" Let's go out and get violets and be real people."

" We are real people. You play so silly. You aren't old enough to understand."

The brown-eyed child looked acutely depressed. Suddenly she dropped the stone and began to creep out disconsolately from under the blackthorn-tree. The fair child adopted a new, cajoling tone.

" It's easy," she said. " You only have to put it on a bit and you're a lady. We can start again and you can be a duchess. Come on."

The dark child looked back for a moment very dubiously, as though it were too much to believe, and then walked away up the bank. The other child sniffed and tossed her head with fierce pride and called out:

" You needn't think you can come back here now you've gone."

Without answering, the brown-eyed child walked away behind the hawthorn-trees and by the hedge at the top of the bank. She became lost in a world of dog's-mercury and budding hawthorn and pale violets. She came upon primrose buds and finally a cluster of opened primroses and a bed of white anemones. Talking to herself, she gathered flowers and leaves and put them in her hair, as the fair girl had done.

The fair child crept out from under the blackthorn tree. She had tucked her frock in her pale blue knickers and she stood upright on her toes, like a ballet-dancer. She broke off a spray of blackthorn and held it with both hands above her head and then twirled on her toes and did high kicks and waltzed majestically round and round the blackthorn tree. Now and then she broke out and sang to herself. She introduced a stage vibrato into her voice and she danced about the blackthorn tree to the tune she made, acting perfectly.

Finally the brown-haired child came down the bank again. She saw the fair child dancing and she suddenly conceived a desire to dance too. She stood by the tree and waited. The fair girl saw her.

" You needn't come here! " she sneered.

A spasm of sadness crossed the face of the dark child. She turned and descended the bank very slowly, sometimes pausing and looking backward and then edging unwillingly away. Finally, with the primroses and the single anemone still shining in her hair, she reached the road and walked slowly away and disappeared.

When she had gone there was nothing left to interrupt the gaiety of the dancing child, the flowers about the earth and the blackthorn tree scattering its shower of lovely stars.

H. E. Bates.

SONG OF ANTIQUITY

"BESIDE the ocean's din she combed her hair "
And sad and somnolent the wavelets fell
Soft lulling cadences. More bright, more fair
Than sunlight still as trees, more tunable

Than thin cascades in tumbling atmosphere
Tremble; of hovering memories
Ringlets more frail than air, each fragile bell
Shook, quivered—Silence ever transparenter.

Remember not; oh, no, remember ne'er
Such song of sorrow seated by the shore,
That broken fragment *Memory!* Ask not where
Or why or whence, no more. Immortal Care

Carved into mortal sight She combed her hair
Beside the ocean's din. Her ringlets fell
Soundless as foam brightening the atmosphere,
Hope's frail cascades in gloom untellable.

W. J. Turner.

NICOTINE

A History of Smoking. By Count Corti. Translated from the German by Paul England. Harrap. 12s. 6d.

It is an odd contrast. Here is the reproduction of a relief from the Maya temple at Palenque. A horrible old man, with the features of a University don, and a head-dress in the form of an eagle, a serpent between his feet, and a leopard skin on his back, emits from a tube a queer decorative pattern, symbolising tobacco smoke. And, on the other hand, Dick, Tom, and Harry, Jane and Eliza light their cigarettes at the cocktail party, altogether without sense of symbolism or ceremony. It is the reversal of the common rule by which things of simple, daily use become sacred mysteries or their appurtenances: the sacred mystery of the tobacco incense in the tortured and damnable Aztec and Maya temples is now a mere accompaniment to Gin and Italian and after dinner coffee.

Count Corti has given a very clear account of the adventures of tobacco from its passage out of America to the present day, and Mr. Paul England, the translator, has made an English book out of his German text. And it is entertaining to note that two parties were immediately formed. Generally, the scientific people were enthusiastic supporters of the new habit. Thevet, a Frenchman exiled in Brazil, said you could live on it for eight or nine days without any other kind of food. " It's board and lodging to me, is smoke," said the gentleman in the parlour of the Magpie and Stump. Thevet added that tobacco carried off the superfluous humours of the brain. Jean Nicot, another Frenchman, had heard that the herb, applied as a plaster, worked wonders in cases of cancer and rodent ulcer; and thus, from Nicot, the tobacco plant gets its learned name. Nicolo Monardes, of the University of Seville, declared that tobacco would cure almost everything. The herb was planted in botanical gardens in Switzerland in the middle of the sixteenth century. The general opinion was that a true universal medicine had been brought from the new world to the old; though a few professors maintained that it gave them fits. The whole stress was laid on the supposed curative powers of the new discovery; it was reserved for the English, a cheerful race at heart, to smoke because they liked it; otherwise, for fun. Anatomy Burton,

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who ought to have known better, made a distinction between the two uses; if you took it as medicine, to make yourself sick, it was a rare vomit, and a sovran remedy; but if you smoked because you liked smoking, then tobacco became a disgusting and loathsome vice.

The battle was now raging. James I marshalled all his considerable and curious learning against the tobacco habit. It was:

"Lothesome to the eye, hatefull to the nose, harmefull to the braine, dangerous to the Lungs, and in the black stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible Stigian smoke of the pit that is bottomelesse."

In Germany the soldiers of the Thirty Years War were tremendous smokers, but the Emperor forbade the practice as unhealthy, and likely to lead to fires, and science vacillated between the two extremes of very wholesome and entirely devilish and destructive. The Roman Church vacillated also, first prohibiting and then allowing snufftaking in church. The Grand Turk, Murad IV, however, knew his own mind. He came to the conclusion that he didn't like smoking, and executed smokers by the thousand. So the struggle went on, even to our own day. We have heard how Bishops were reduced to smoking up the chimneys of Windsor Castle, in Victoria's time, though it was a Bishop, Ollivant of Llandaff, who uttered the dreadful saying: "Show me a smoker, and you show me a drinker." Pendennis, it will be remembered, scented his whiskers with eau-de-Cologne because, as he told Smoky Warrington, he was going to see some women. Fifty years ago there were country houses where the guest was allowed, as an indulgence to a dubious habit, to smoke in the harness-room by day, and in the kitchen, after the servants had gone to bed, by night. A friend of the writer's still preserves his father's smoking jacket, a curious, quilted vestment, which he wears on occasions of semi-state: the reason of it being that the smoker's ordinary clothes should not be infected with the noisome stench of tobacco-smoke, to the legitimate offence of all good women. In America, there are still societies in which pipes and piety are regarded as incompatibles. But this brave cause does not stand where it did. Count Corti says that the prohibition of cigarettes, once enforced in twelve states, is now everywhere repealed, the last state to lapse being Kansas, which fell from grace in 1927. The old anti-tobacco nonsense, still survives, however, in boys' schools. In these queer places, smoking is a capital offence; and a recent Headmaster of Harrow went so far as to request parents and relatives to abstain from smoking in the Harrow streets. Presumably, it is held to be injurious to the health of adolescence; in spite of the fact that the Dutch, one of the sturdiest and strongest races of the world, were accustomed, till quite recently at all events, to teach small boys to smoke fat cigars at the age of three or four. "Look at him!" said the proud Dutch mother, pointing to her tiny toddler with his massive cigar, "doesn't he puff away like a man?"

The true reason of the long war against tobacco must, one supposes, be sought in that strange and obscure tendency in human nature which hates the sight of enjoyment of any kind. This tendency has been often identified with asceticism; but the error of this identification is grave. The ascetic calls nothing common or unclean: he gives up a lesser good to secure a greater, just as a man who is to row in a boat race submits to all sorts of dietary prohibitions and limitations in order that he may row his very best between Putney and Mortlake. He does not wish the rest of us to give up our pipes and puff pastry: we are not rowing men in for a big race. He abstains for the time because he is training, and so the ascetic, who is also in for a big race, abstains from many excellent gifts, without demanding that the rest of mankind should follow his example.

The "anti" doctrine is quite distinct from the doctrine of asceticism. It hates the sight of enjoyment, it hates all beauties and delights. It manifests itself differently at different periods. It is conveniently called Puritanism, though the sixteenth and seventeenth century Puritans, blasphemers of custard and disparagers of their best and dearest friend plum porridge, were by no means averse from pipes and ale. Coventry Patmore, recognising the presence of Puritanism in the Roman Catholic Church, put it down to the account of the Reformation. But the force behind Puritanism is of much older date. It was manifested in the Manichees; it is manifested in the Hooligan, who, seeing a fair green bough hanging over a wall, tears it down. The interior doctrine behind these varying manifestations is: "The earth is the devil's and the fullness thereof."

Arthur Machen.

MR. ALDOUS HUXLEY'S ESSAYS

Music at Night, and Other Essays. By Aldous Huxley. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

I should think no modern writer's work has been more consistently individual than that of Mr. Aldous Huxley. One may prefer the novels to the essays (I myself very much prefer them), but the essays—even those which are purely speculative and critical—are very like the novels. The novels also are critical—and subjective. The world they create, compared with the objective worlds created by writers such as Dickens or Trollope, is, in its own way, nearly as narrowly circumscribed as Mr. Huxley finds the world of El Greco to be. In that fantastic "Meditation on El Greco"—one of the most brilliant papers in the new volume—he sees all the Spanish artist's people shut up in the belly of a whale: "they are in prison and, which makes it worse, in a visceral prison." Mr. Huxley's people are not in a prison of this sort, but we do see them, and see them all the time, imprisoned in his own mind. They have considerable freedom of action there; it is only that everything they do and say refers us directly back to their creator, so that really we are attracted or repelled not by the story and the characters in it, but by the personality which so deeply colours them. I happen to be attracted, therefore the novels please and amuse me: on the other hand, I know several persons whom they exasperate to the point of rage.

The tales are more communicative than the essays, because they offer so much wider a field for play of imagination and variety of mood. The essayist deliberately takes us into his confidence, therefore he knows exactly what it is he is going to confide; but the novelist is occasionally off his guard. It is not necessary, for instance, to approach Mr. Huxley's fictions in the spirit of a detective to discover from them that he is much less devoid of human sympathy, emotion, and compassion than the aloof and disillusioned attitude of the essayist implies. The essays remain detached, calm, and impartial, whether he is speculating on our chances of a future life, or explaining his reason for declining to write an article on "Why Women Are No Mystery to Me." The subject had proved difficult:

> The emissary from the great American journal himself admitted the difficulty of it. "In writing personal confessions," he epigrammatically put it, "it's hard to strike the happy mean between reticence and bad taste." I said nothing, but I reflected that my personal confessions, if I were to make them, would be lacking in the human, the all too human, touches demanded by the million readers. I have no objection to indulging in bad taste when I am writing about other people, particularly imaginary people. But with regard to myself, I can tolerate only reticence.

This admission is, for those who dislike or are impervious to Mr. Huxley's kind of humour, probably the sort of thing that annoys. Irony, even of the gentlest description, inevitably puzzles *somebody*, and to confess that you rather like indulging now and then in bad taste, to the literal-minded seems a flouting of the decencies of life. Moreover, Mr. Huxley, at one time or another, *has* flouted a good many of what at least pass for the decencies of life. These are inclined to bore him, and it has never been his habit to be "utterly purposed that he will not offend."

What he *is* purposed not to do is to give the faintest encouragement to sentimentality. "Les choses humaines n'inspirent que deux sentiments aux esprits bien faits: l'admiration ou la pitié":—even if he believed that, Mr. Huxley would never say it. And yet he has written more than one story which must have had its origin in just such a creed—or, at any rate, such a mood. But stories are stories, and the unimpassioned and disillusioned commentator upon life cannot permit himself the luxury of reflections liable to be appreciated by the emotional. In fact, were we to come upon such a sentence in an essay of Mr. Huxley's it would give us a much greater shock than a passage in praise of pornography. We recognise the fact, but the question remains: *Why* should the disillusioned so seldom seek an escape in writing about things for which they feel admiration or pity? There must be *some* such things. Why should Flaubert, for example, waste an immense amount of time and labour on the composition of *Bouvard et Pécuchet*? Mr. Huxley would draw the line there; he is no fonder than the rest of us of dreariness for dreariness' sake. Nevertheless, we cannot help wishing that he was more frequently moved to dwell upon what charms him, and, I confess, to me it seems strange that the man who wrote

HARRAP

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the beautiful opening of *Music at Night* should so seldom want to write in that vein.

The essays in the present volume are, broadly speaking, of three kinds—critical, whimsical, and didactic. Didactic in a negative sense, however, for the author has no philosophic nostrum to propound. He sees our age—the petrol age—as "an age of unprecedented vulgarity," but he is resigned to the spectacle—a stoic, at times slightly depressed; perhaps, but more frequently amused—undaunted by talkies and movies, undaunted even by the prospect of "tasties, smellies, and feelies." The "Meditation on Arundel Street" is typical. "A walk down Arundel Street in London," he tells us, "remains, after all, the best introduction to philosophy. Keep your eyes to the left as you descend towards the river from the Strand. You will observe that the *Christian World* is published at Number Seven, and a few yards further down, at Number Nine, *The Feathered World*." The juxtaposition of these two worlds, which never, never can be made to meet, is exactly the kind of thing to tickle Mr. Huxley's fancy. The whole book, one might almost say, is the outcome of such juxtapositions. And it is written with the lucidity, the grace, and the distinction which never desert Mr. Huxley, no matter what his subject may be.

Forrest Reid.

VIRGINIA WOOLF SOLILOQUISES

The Waves. By Virginia Woolf. Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.

Because it is her constant endeavour to record the psychological minutiæ of experience, to snare in words an incommunicable secret, and to show the bubble of consciousness shining, expanding, reflecting—in its depths and on its surface—the changing colours of the universe around it, Mrs. Woolf's writing has always been "difficult": by which I mean that it will yield its motive, its clear and luminous core, only to a reader who is ready to empty himself of preconceptions and to become in the highest degree receptive, patient, searching. In her fidelity to this austere purpose she has discarded one by one, as distractions, the various devices which most writers, and nearly all readers, have held to be not merely aids but obvious necessities of narrative. She does not, as Henry James did, starve the visual sense; her drama does not, as his did, take place in a sort of cerebral twilight where no sound ever falls (I exaggerate in the interests of definition). Indeed, it is precisely by a series of significant images, both visual and aural, that she seduces one's immediate attention; and the spell is reinforced by the exquisite cadences of her prose. But though she is lavish of imagery, having the poet's instinct for the concrete phrase, this imagery does not, for the most part, relate to the physical world from which it is borrowed: it is merely a translation, into terms of that world, of apprehensions not otherwise suggestible. Consciousness, the immediate experience, is her quarry: the objective universe is no more than a hypothesis. Reading her books in their order, one observes that she becomes increasingly jealous of the space given to the description of "action." From *Jacob's Room* onwards (except in *Orlando*, which was an experiment in another kind) this "action"—the physical behaviour of her characters—is more or less parenthetical, and outward phenomena—storms and sunsets, stars and flowers, the pageant of human bodies—are seen only as reflections in the moving mirror of consciousness, moments in a continuing time-sensation. In short, Mrs. Woolf is a metaphysical poet who has chosen prose-fiction for her medium.

In her new book, *The Waves*, she pursues her peculiar technique to its logical extreme, and comes, in a sense, full circle. Six characters, three men and three women, speak in soliloquy against the background of the sea. We see them abstracted from time, lifted out of the circumstances of daily life. They have each a name, each a private and independent existence; but in one important respect they are all Virginia Woolf. Every novelist must create his people out of his own psychological substance; they live with his life; the book is an extension of his being. The ordinary novelist, however, in support of his conceit that these characters are separate from each other and from him, is at pains to differentiate them by describing their individual appearance, gestures, circumstances, physical habits, and above all by endowing each with an idiom of his own. But here, in Mrs. Woolf's book, all these aids to illusion are deliberately dispensed with. Every novelist speaks through his various masks; but her masks on this occasion—Bernard, Susan, and so on—are confessed as such, and the voice speaking through them never varies, never disguises itself, speaks always in its own subtle literary idiom, and gives utterance to thoughts which the character in question (a child, let us say) could not, in nature, have had. It is not as if the author said: "Here are certain people in this or that situation. And this is what they are thinking." It is not even: "This is what, though they are not thinking it, they have in their minds." It is rather: "If they were aware of themselves as I, their creator, am aware of them, and if, further, I were to lend them all the resources of my mind and art, this is what they could tell us." Nothing, it is evident, could be more remote from naturalism than that. The quest for an ultimate personal reality, the resolve to pare away from the psyche all adhesive irrelevancies, has led this writer to adopt a purely non-representational convention, a classical formalism. No literary convention is more artificial, or in appearance more absurdly naive, than the soliloquy; and what Mrs. Woolf does with it here is little short of miraculous. We see her people as personal essences. They mature; they grow old. The use of the first person singular is a transparent device; it is even, if you like, a kind of cheating, since, once we have accepted it, it gives us just that illusion of intimacy which, in logic, the method cannot for a moment support. But this only means that Mrs. Woolf has solved, for herself, the problem of how one may eat one's cake and have it. It is impossible to describe, impossible to do more than salute, the richness, the strangeness, the poetic illumination of this book. The characters are not analysed, as in a laboratory: they are entered into, intuited. In each soliloquy in this pattern of soliloquies we ourselves are at the centre. We *are* Bernard, we *are* Susan, but with this difference: that we have borrowed, for a moment, the lamp of genius, and by its light may read the secrets of our private universe.

Gerald Bullett.

A MODERN SUMMA

An Outline of Modern Knowledge. Edited by Professor William Rose. Gollancz. 8s. 6d.

"What is the use," thought Alice, "of a book without pictures or conversations?" The question which perturbed Alice may trouble readers as they take up the book before us. Not that it is quite bereft of illustration, for there are a number of diagrams and maps. But these doubts disappear when it is realised that the 1,000 pages of this book are not meant to be read through at one sitting. It is an encyclopædia of knowledge, to be dipped into as one feels inclined. As such it can be very heartily recommended. Indeed, it is a triumph from both the literary and the mechanical points of view. That so much accurate and scholarly information can be imparted for so modest a sum is remarkable. The man who spends 8s. 6d. on this book shall save much expenditure on others. A mere list of the contributors is very impressive, and their contributions, when read, are found to confirm old-established reputations and enhance growing ones. As for the mechanical side, the reader who approaches the volume in the mood of Hercules bracing himself for one of his labours will find himself pleasantly surprised. The type, which is long primer, is agreeably clear and just the right paper has been found; only where the diagrams can be seen through the previous page does the paper fail in its purpose.

This compendium is divided into three sections. The first treats of science, philosophy, and psychology; the second of economics, political science, and history; and the third of the principles of literature and art. The word "principles" gives the keynote of the book; for even in 1,000 pages principles must receive emphasis rather than facts. This is specially exemplified in the section on history, where principles can easily be exemplified but facts must be rigidly ruled out. There is not the least "writing down" in this volume as in so many popular expositions. The articles are written by experts for people who want something more than chat. There is, however, some variety in the depth of knowledge imparted; while the article of Professor F. A. E. Crew on "Sex" is almost futuristic in attempting to be up to date, that of Professor James Rice on "The Nature of Mathematics" is, perhaps advisedly, almost elementary.

In noticing individual contributions there is bound to be selection. The first section opens with "A Philosophic and Scientific Retrospect" by Professor A. Wolf. It gives an admirably synoptic view of the course of thought over 2,000 years and is a fitting introduction. Professor W. R. Matthews brings the latest scientific theories to bear on "The Idea of God," and

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finds that monotheism is the only conception of the Divine which is compatible with the demands of reason and conscience. Mr. J. W. N. Sullivan differs from most of the other contributors in being an expositor rather than conducting original research, but his beautifully lucid exposition of "The Nature of the Universe" must increase his reputation as an interpreter. He is followed with an article, for which no praise is too high, by Professor R. A. Sampson on "Astronomy." "The Nature of Mathematics" might have included a discussion of transfinite numbers without frightening readers. Sir J. Arthur Thomson needs no commendation; his article on "Biology and Human Progress" is of his best. Professor Crew devotes much of his chapter to the fascinating problem of the determination of sex. "Psychology" is admirably treated, for the compass granted, by Professor Aveling. He is followed by Professor J. C. Flügel, whose treatment of "Theories of Psycho-Analysis" shows him to go the whole Freudian hog with a hearty dislike for the rebellious spirits, Adler and Jung. While the article is one of the most interesting, the encyclopædic nature of the book might have been better served by a more impartial survey. The intellectual fare so far provided in the first section is completed by wine that needs no bush—Dr. R. R. Marett on "The Beginnings of Morals and Culture," Professor E. A. Gardner on "The Achievements of Archæology," and Professor Wolf on "Recent and Contemporary Philosophy."

The second section is that most pertinent at the present time of crisis, when Mr. Maurice Dobb's "Introduction to Economics" and Professor F. T. Gregory's views on "Finance" should be widely read. Mr. G. D. H. Cole has two articles, one on industrial organisation and one on political organisation. "International Organisation" is entrusted to Dr. C. Delisle Burns and "Modern Geographical Ideas" to Dr. Dudley Stamp. But the most interesting, as it is also the most controversial, essay in the section is that of Professor F. J. C. Hearnshaw on "The Science of History." Let this only be said here that his view of history forces him to dismiss Gibbon as one name in a school headed by Voltaire.

The third section is remarkable for an essay—perhaps the best in the whole book—by Professor Lascelles Abercrombie on "Principles of Literary Criticism." It is worth the price of the volume in itself. Much of it is devoted to an elucidation of Aristotle's "Poetics" and is surely a piece of permanent criticism of that classic text. "The Arts of Painting and Sculpture" are in the competent hands of Mr. Roger Fry, while "The Theory and Practice of Architecture" and "An Introduction to Music" are treated by Professor C. H. Reilly and Professor R. O. Morris respectively.

We cannot close without a tribute to the editor, Professor William Rose. For to him must be given chief credit for defying the centrifugal tendencies of modern science and bringing all these specialist writers together. His also is the excellent decision that "it is not possible to popularise to more than a certain extent without putting matters so simply that the explanation ceases to be true." A comprehensive index completes the book.

ALL MANKIND'S EPITOME

Unrecorded. By Mrs. R. S. Garnett. Benn. 7s. 6d.

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The King's Goose. By Alfred Tresidder Sheppard. Hodder and Stoughton. 7s. 6d.

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A modern historian has well said that no one century, not even the twentieth, is more real than any other, but most historians are apt to underestimate the ordinary man's difficulty in grasping this. He does not conceive of the present in terms of dates and the dry record of facts, and such, for him, cannot make the past live; it must be brought home to him not only that we ourselves are cannon-fodder for the historical gunners of the future, but also, to change the metaphor, that the common people have always been the stuff of which history is made. It is this aspect of history which the professional historian so frequently fails to emphasise, and which gives the historical novelist the chance to present a greater than historical truth.

Mrs. Garnett has seized on this chance and has made the most of it; the result is a story, powerfully imagined and finely told, which must arouse pity and horror in the least sensitive of readers. In the foreword to *Unrecorded* the author refers to history as a carpet, the surface of which presents a splendid and orderly appearance, and announces that it is the reverse side of the carpet with which she is concerned. And the underneath is not the careful mixing of gold and blue, the delicate shading of orange and green, the blending of all colours into an harmonious whole, such as the surface seems, but rather a crude discord of too vivid tints in an apparently meaningless pattern, and, like the carpet of Flecker's Caliph, "whelmed in the gloom-greys of abasement, touched with the glaring reds of pain, and the whole edged with the black border of annihilation." The story of Margaret Webster, from the time she is seized by rough soldiers at the sack of Ludlow by the Lancastrians, does not make pleasant reading. Raped by the commander and, on refusing to accept her fate, thrown to the soldiers, losing her sanity temporarily and her faith completely, giving birth to a child and rejoicing at its death, sheltered only to bring destruction on those who gave her shelter, and loving at last only to lose her lover, Margaret's life is one of dire tragedy. The individual tragedy, indeed, becomes so poignant that the reader is apt to forget what the author remembers, that such a life was by no means exceptional; the very casualness of Mrs. Garnett's reference to the death of the central figure in her novel emphasises by its irony how unimportant that death was in the eyes of Margaret's contemporaries. It is this double appeal, that of Margaret as an individual and that of Margaret as the type of many women of her time, that, in spite of occasional weaknesses of plot, makes Mrs. Garnett's book so strangely moving. The author does not attempt to read meaning into the pattern of Margaret's life; she paints a picture and states a problem, but not even the Book of Job affords an answer to her problem-picture. The reader might well remember the words of the Spirit of the Years in that last, stupendous scene of *The Dynasts*:

> Thus doth the Great Foresightless mechanize
> In blank entrancement now as evermore
> Its ceaseless artistries in Circumstance
> Of curious stuff and braid, as just forthshown.
> Yet but one flimsy riband of Its web
> Have we here watched in weaving. . . .

There is the same universality, though not so intensely felt, about the life of Catherine Lentz, whose diary *Catherine Joins Up* purports to be. The scene of the story is Lorraine during the war, and the young Catherine joins the Red Cross and is stationed at Metz, where wounded soilders of all nationalities come under her care. Lucien, whom she loves, but to whom she has refused to give herself before he leaves for the front, is killed, and the story ends in bitterness and despair. Catherine is, perhaps, a more exceptional character than Margaret, and her life therefore does not have the same significance; yet how many women must have felt in different circumstances as she did when a French prisoner arrived at Metz.:

> He nodded towards us, and his chubby face was wreathed in smiles when he called out: "For me the war is over." I looked at him, and he was silent. It's all right to protest against the war, one may even fight against it passionately, or one may accept it passively, but no one in the whole world has a right to say: For me the war is over.

Fraulein Thomas's novel has attained immense success in Germany, and as it has been very adequately translated there is no reason why it should not prove equally popular here among those who are not already surfeited with stories of the war.

Less creative imagination and, possibly, more historical knowledge has gone to the making of *The King's Goose*; at least, the knowledge is more ostentatiously displayed and the book is often overloaded with detail. Mr. Sheppard is admittedly concerned with the mighty ones of the earth, with the King of France and his nobles, and more especially with the King's jester and Diane de Poitiers, whose beauty dazzled the court of the first Francis; the common people do not enter into his tale, hardly even as a background, and its merit lies rather in its solidity and its conventional romantic appeal than in any striking originality of outlook or expression. *The King's Goose*, however, maintains a high standard of achievement of which many authors with less to their credit than Mr. Sheppard might with reason be proud.

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scene is laid in Scotland, and its theme is the aftermath of Flodden. Unlikely characters meet with unlikely adventures, but the story goes with a swing and the author keeps to the point. *The Player King* is interesting as an example of a changing literary fashion which is bringing back into favour the English historical novel; and if that revival, of which all four novels are a manifestation, produces many books like that of Mrs. Garnett, there will be no one who will not welcome it.

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Back to Montparnasse. By S. Huddleston. Harrap. 15s.

Your true Londoner is rarely born there. To be enthusiastic about the streets of gold and be able to sing the joys of that Tom Tiddler's ground it is generally—not always—necessary to have made the great adventure, to have seen the lights from afar, and followed them and been enchanted, or disenchanted. We are not sure that Mr. Rhys is yet reconciled to the city where books are made for folk in the country to read. In his recollections he has much to tell of friends, famous, unknown, forgotten, or still to be acclaimed. He has loved the life of letters—the comradeship of fellow-poets, the discussion about books, the pleasantness of an existence to which the making of money is, whether one wills it or not, always incidental (often accidental, too); he has an eye, as any poet must have, for the beauties of London—the Thames of Chelsea, Hampstead and its heathland, Westminster and its ghosts. Yet we doubt his love for London. He is only a sojourner in the city, and knows its unreality, and its power to tuck things away in hiding, as it has taken Hampstead's Fleet River and buried it under the Street.

Poet, critic, anthologist, Mr. Rhys is best known to the average reader as an editor. How blessed were those who, in their schooldays, came on the Camelot Classics—that "bob" series which began with Malory, and did not end until it included Ibsen and Havelock Ellis. We wish Mr. Rhys had told us more of that mysterious Walter Scott of Newcastle, who published the series, and the Canterbury Poets, and the first collected Ibsen, some bad but useful translations of Tolstoy, and that great library, the Contemporary Science Series. His conquest of the London market was a surprising feat, and indicated a genius for publishing not less than that of J. M. Dent. Dent was more of an artist than Scott, and his books always had beauty. His enterprise and initiative did not prevent him from recognising and employing men of talent equal to his own; and for him Gollancz made the Temple Shakespeare and the Temple Classics, and Mr. Rhys made Everyman's Library. That series, together with *The World's Classics* started by Mr. Grant Richards, a little earlier (or simultaneously? Mr. Rhys is too chary of dates) provided the youth of this century with cheap editions in worthy succession of the series designed for their forefathers by Bohn, by Cassell, by Warne and by Routledge. But no popular series—though Henry Morley deserves to be more remembered than he is—ever had an editor so broad-minded, so adept, so given to felicities as Ernest Rhys. His book betrays to the obtusest reader how he succeeded—tact, a friendliness that was never indiscriminate, a sense of character and a passion for beauty—even still these gifts may get a man some material reward. It is plain that Mr. Rhys has had to wait for that reward, and it is very much to the honour of the house of Dent that they have allowed him to be candid about the strange miserliness that was part of J. M. Dent's character, and have seen to it that Mr. Rhys has not ultimately suffered from it.

Mr. Milne's Fleet Street is rather a sober, indeed a dull affair after Mr. Rhys' London; but, as if in compensation, Mr. Milne, who came from the Grampians, is an enthusiastic Londoner. He has all the romanticism of the Scot, and the oddest things rouse in him an overwhelming sentiment of loyalty—even Mrs. Maybrick, even Labouchere take on something of the fascination which all things in London have for Mr. Milne. For him Fleet Street is still the street of the great papers and the great journalists, though many of the most famous newspapers in England have never had an office there. Indeed, the reputation of Fleet Street as the journalist's natural home springs from the fact that here are many London offices of provincial papers, here are many inns frequented by journalists, it is the artery of newspaper-land, and its proximity to the old Whitefriars reminds one of the time when not a few rogues earned a living by writing—if nothing better than libels or pasquinades. Mr. Milne is not a lively writer, but he has met many famous people and interviewed not a few, and his volume is a pleasant if rather mild addition to the gossip about nineteenth-century lions. After Mr. Milne's pages it is a rare pleasure to pick up Mr. Huddleston's quick, informed, vivacious chronicle of Montmartre. Paris alters more quickly than London—but also Paris remains more definitely the same. It is impossible for any but very credulous and very reverent Americans to find in Fleet Street the London of Dr. Johnson; but anywhere in the Latin Quarter is the Paris of Villon, and it is not hard to find a salon where the Scudèry would quickly make herself at home. Mr. Huddleston's Paris is essentially, though it is the Paris of to-day and yesterday, also the Paris of Verlaine, Mallarmé, Peladan, Zola, the Goncourts and others made immortal by earlier authors. The chief difference is that this recent Montmartre has more American victims than have the old. One day a student will come along and compile a thesis on the Par-Americans. Their zeal and their gravity has changed Paris. Parisians used to defend their great *blagueurs*' best efforts because the English and other foreigners and some Frenchmen mocked at them; now the *blagueur* has to be defended because the American will take him so seriously. A movement that would have died as quickly as it grew now receives support and artificial respiration, and lumbers the cafés under earnest American nursing. Its producers can hardly disown it, and so miserably they remain in attendance on a splendid corpse, when they would be about the making of a new infant. It is a hard fate, and Mr. Huddleston writes with admirable sense of the real life that goes on in spite of all the falsity and pays tribute to the passion for art that inspires the most flippant, the least likely of the Parisian world.

THEY HAVE SAID

Contemporary Comments. By E. H. Lacon-Watson. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 16s.

Mr. Lacon-Watson has missed producing a brilliant and valuable contribution to criticism and biography. His idea is good. He takes eighteen well-known writers of the early nineteenth century and follows up his short biographical accounts with about twenty pages of contemporary comments upon each writer. On Shelley, for example, we read first a description from Medwin of Shelley's physical beauties and peculiarities, then a letter of literary criticism from Byron to Shelley, and the letter to Moore in which Byron insists that Shelley is "the *least* selfish and the mildest of men." Lamb's famous letter to Bernard Barton follows. "Shelley I saw once. His voice was the most obnoxious squeak I ever was tormented with. . . ." After that a quotation from Carlyle's reminiscences in which Carlyle and Southey exchange lugubrious words—"A haggard existence that of his." Then Trelawney reports Wordsworth shaking his head and saying "Won't do" over *The Cenci* as he climbs into a carriage at Lausanne, and Peacock describes Shelley's person and his voice. Then comes a long, pompous bigoted quotation from the *Quarterly* on the *Revolt of Islam*; the familiar letter from Keats to Shelley; a brilliant passage from Hazlitt upon Shelley's character and genius; two personally descriptive passages, one from Cowden Clarke, the other from Leigh Hunt; criticism of his poetry from Leigh Hunt, and, finally, a sympathetic paragraph from De Quincey's essay on Shelley. These commentators all have well-known names, but Mr. Lacon-Watson does occasionally draw, sometimes very effectively, upon less-known writers. Mary Howitt reminds her sister how they read *Lalla Rookh* together on a washing day—"We read and clapped our clear-starching, read and clapped, read and clapped and read again, and all the time our souls were not on this earth."

This cannot fail to be fascinating—for a little, but it cannot be read for more than half an hour at a time; the perpetual chatter and clash of voices grow too wearisome. We miss the sound of a dominating voice on which we might rest our attention. "Of course," says the author, "but I never intended anyone to read it for more than half an hour at a time." In that case nothing remains to be said except that this is an entertaining commonplace book, only at fault in not providing blank pages for the reader to add his own favourite quotations. But the book gives the impression that the author aimed at some sort of organisation but did not take sufficient pains either

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97 & 99, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C.2

in the thinking out or the working out of his plan. He arranges the material to show off its variety, putting contradictory views together, and separating descriptive passages that have too much in common. While this adds to the liveliness of the book for casual reading, it whittles away the significance of the comments.

There are various patterns in which the material might have been arranged. None of these remarkable people understood one another perfectly (we do not understand them perfectly to-day), but the complexities of their natures and the caprices of their muses evoked then (and evoke now) sympathies and antagonisms which can be traced to deep-rooted traditions of thought and tendencies of human feeling. Had Mr. Lacon-Watson taken these traditions and tendencies into consideration each of his eighteen writers would have stood out far more clearly, and their commentators, by being ranged together—although not crudely as friends or enemies—would themselves have become more significant, and their words gained in decisiveness and authority.

The book is not, of course, a substitute for biography, but a supplement to it and a subversive one, for weak characters lend themselves to description by *obiter dicta* and strong do not. Byron in this book makes a deeper impression than Scott, and the picture of Rogers is more memorable than the picture of Wordsworth; the contorted, the odd and the curious benefit, but the natural and simple characters suffer. Nor is the book a substitute for criticism, but it provides a grim lesson for reviewers. Scarcely any of the quotations from contemporary periodicals has any intrinsic value. From Jeffrey down (but the author might well have included his too little known praise of Keats) they selected trivialities and inessentials both for their approval and for their blame.

An idea seems to be growing up in the publishing world that the less original work a volume contains, the scantier its notes and references, and the more conspicuously absent its index, the bigger the price that can be charged for it. There is nothing exceptional in the format of *Contemporary Comments* to account for its price, and at a moderate price it would have been within the reach of teachers and students, the section of the public most likely to appreciate its value.

Lyn Ll. Irvine.

CONTEMPORARIES

Archbishop Bernard: Professor, Prelate, and Provost. By The Rev. Robert H. Murray. S.P.C.K. 10s. 6d.

Their Trackless Way: a Book of Memories. By Adèle Le Bourgeois Chapin. Constable. 16s.

One Man's Road. By Arthur Waugh. Chapman and Hall. 18s.

It is always interesting, when a batch of contemporary biographies comes into one's hands, to seek out the elements they have in common, the points at which they touch or overlap. The late Archbishop Bernard, born in 1860; Mrs. Chapin, born in 1862, and Mr. Arthur Waugh, born in 1866, may never have met, but chance might easily have brought them into contact with each other in the course of the last thirty-five years. Throughout this period Mr. Waugh has been a conspicuous figure in that literary London into which Mrs. Chapin was plunged when she came to England in the mid-'nineties, travelling hither from her native Louisiana by way of the land of her forefathers, France. Dr. Bernard, from the day he came down from Trinity College, Dublin, had almost as many friends in England as in Ireland, among them at least a score who must have been well known both to Mrs. Chapin and Mr. Waugh. Of just one of these, as it happens, all three have things to tell—namely, of Lecky. Mr. Waugh recalls how at an Oxford "Encaenia" the disrespectful undergraduates called out to Lecky that his tomes were "too long and too dull." Dr. Bernard, in a passage cited by his biographer, describes how, in 1895, when parliamentary candidates for Dublin University, the historian's mild spirit was for once ruffled. How were they to know what the candidate's opinions were? A country clergyman wrote to inquire—"Has Mr. Lecky written any books?"—"Has this man really a vote at a University election?" was all Lecky said. Mrs. Chapin would have been a better qualified elector. A student of the English classics, she had her Lecky by heart when she made his acquaintance in 1902. "I did not know you were a man," she exclaimed to him then, "I thought you were a book!"

Most writers who met Lecky have been moved to give us their impressions of him. Mrs. Chapin's are very vivid:

> I remember one Sunday afternoon when he came to tea. I can see him now, as he sat ready for talk, with a detached expression and a prehensile movement of his long neck, as if he were in search of intellectual food, much as a giraffe stretches his neck to reach the tender shoots at the top of the tree. . . . His remarks were put in a questioning way and he shared his query with you—his mental process. Indeed, he looked like an interrogation mark, but a kind one, who hoped the question would be satisfactorily answered.

Similarly at home in the world of art and literature, the subjects of the three books show a likeness also in the tranquil prosperity of their lives. One great sorrow Dr. Bernard knew—the death of his eldest son at Gallipoli in 1915. Apart from this, his existence seems to have been enviably happy. Archbishop of Dublin from 1915 to 1919, he was then elected Provost of Trinity. This most congenial post he held until he died, universally esteemed, in 1927.

Enviably happy, also, the records, down to date, of Mrs. Chapin and Mr. Waugh. "Of all business thoroughfares, Fleet Street is the most treacherous," Mr. Waugh declares with truth, but few of us can hope to walk to the end of it so surefootedly and successfully as he. Twenty-eight years managing director of the great publishing house of Chapman and Hall; forty years an author and journalist of real mark; last, but not least, the father of two brilliant sons: that is a career to be looked back upon with some complacency. Mr. Waugh, like the rest of us, will have had his troubles, but save for one episode—a brief set-back in his early 'twenties—he keeps them to himself. This book of his memories might have on the title-page the cheerful motto customary on sundials.

The scenes of Mr. Waugh's narrative are chiefly in Oxford and London. Archbishop Bernard's biography takes us out of the British Islands only for a glimpse at pre-war Russia. Mrs. Chapin's wanderings lead us farther afield. Her opening chapters tell of her rapturous girlhood on her father's great sugar plantation on the Mississippi, sixty miles north of New Orleans, and for some of her readers this will be the most attractive section of her book. For the historian, however, and for all interested in politics, its chief interest and importance will lie in her account of her visit to South Africa in 1899, and of the intimate friendship with Lord Milner which began in that year. Perhaps the most piquant of the many stories which she has to tell of Lord Milner is that of how she brought him into touch with Olive Schreiner. "Such a great, good man, but so mistaken!" was Olive Schreiner's judgment on him. "And I felt then," comments Mrs. Chapin, "as I have often felt, that if all the clever, good people could be on one side of a question and all the bad stupid people on the other, how simple life would be!"

THE FATHER OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

Essai sur la Nature du Commerce en Général. By Richard Cantillon. Edited with an English Translation and other Material by Henry Higgs, C.B. Macmillan. 15s.

Cantillon is *par excellence* the economists' economist, as Spenser has been called the poets' poet. And he has been also something of a mystery, even to doubts, but recently resolved, about his identity and his Christian name. His essay, certainly written in English, has only been published hitherto in French, apart from a garbled version brought out in England in the middle of the eighteenth century. The French edition bears a lying title-page, which declares it to have been published in London; Malachi Postlethwait, that industrious eighteenth century compiler, stole large parts of it, and published them in his *Dictionary* without acknowledgment in the same year as the French edition appeared; but his stealings seem to have been from the English manuscript. And, to crown all, Cantillon was undoubtedly murdered in his own house in London, and his house burned down over his body in order to conceal the crime. He is, probably, the only famous economist who has been murdered—a fact which may well give those who are not economists cause for surprise.

The importance of Cantillon lies in the claim that has often been set up for him, since his rediscovery by Stanley Jevons, to be the real "father" of Political Economy. In Great Britain Adam Smith is usually regarded as the father of the "dismal

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science," whereas the Continent prefers as a rule to confer the title on the Physiocrats, and especially Quesnay, from whom Adam Smith borrowed largely. But Cantillon, an English merchant and banker who was settled for many years in Paris, wrote well before Quesnay, who quotes him, and before ever David Hume, whom he has sometimes been credited with imitating. And, while there are parts of his essay that show no advance at all on the cruder bullionist theories of the seventeenth century, other parts show, for his time, a quite astonishing grasp of essential economic principles.

Cantillon is at his best when he is talking about money and the mechanism of exchange. He understands these matters firmly from a practical as well as a theoretical point of view. He has as clear a grasp as Ricardo of the Quantity Theory of Money; and a good deal of his theory of the Foreign Exchanges could perfectly well be used as a modern text-book. His theory of prices is quite as well developed as Ricardo's, and far more clearly put. And, what is historically of even more importance, he anticipates altogether the doctrine usually attributed to the Physiocrats, which makes the land the real source of all value, combining it with a theory which derives value from the joint action of land and labour. Finally, his account of the function of the *entrepreneur* in capitalist production is far ahead of anything that appears in English economics between his day and quite recent times. The invention of the word "*entrepreneur*" has often been attributed to J. B. Say; but here it is, large as life, in Cantillon's essay long before Say began to write.

Mr. Higgs has produced, on the whole, a quite workmanlike translation, using where possible the materials from the garbled English version (possibly written by Richard's cousin, Philip Cantillon, with whom he has often been confused) and from Postlethwait's *Dictionary*. He has also reprinted Jevons's essay on Cantillon, and added a brief life of his own. The result is a volume most welcome to students; for the essay has not been readily available hitherto in French, and not at all in English.

AFTER T. S. ELIOT

Cinder Thursday. By Herbert Palmer. Benn. 3s. 6d.

Charles Lamb complained that Byron's verses only move the spleen. And it is to be doubted whether the spleen (a word which has fallen into regrettable disuse) has ever inspired immortal poetry or even immortal satire. Dryden and Pope are not merely splenetic. The one has muscle and the other brain. One is the athlete of satire and the other the wit. Mr. Herbert Palmer, who is out to satirise the modern school, to administer a purge to Mr. Eliot, the Sitwells and other celebrated names, is splenetic and nothing more.

One sympathises with Mr. Palmer. Poetic inspiration appears to be suffering from the general depression. Victorian optimism has slumped. Mr. Palmer, like Mr. Roy Campbell, is one of the few poets with the energy, the *vivida vis*, of an earlier day. He wants to smack Miss Sitwell on the back and laugh Mr. Eliot, sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, out of his melancholy. I sympathise with Mr. Palmer, but *Cinder Thursday* is a damp squib. Some of its few pages bring on acute (and possibly intended) headache; for instance:

> And ditto by Alan Porter and Kean Seymour and R. C. Ensor,
> And ditto by Richard Aldington and Harold Monro and Francis Bickley,
> And ditto by George Saintsbury and Quiller-Couch and George Sampson,
> And ditto by Miss Sackville West and Rebecca West and Geoffrey West,

and so on, and so on.

I suspect that Mr. Palmer does not know quite what Mr. Eliot is at. They are as far apart as Browning and Tennyson. There is one glory of the sun and another glory of the moon. But then, it is dangerous to speculate about Mr. Eliot, even to praise him, since he complained in *Thoughts After Lambeth* that his poetry was interpreted as expressing the Spirit of the Age. Has not Mr. Eliot himself allowed a quotation to this effect by Mr. I. A. Richards to be printed on the green jacket of *Ash Wednesday* as a puff to *Poems*, 1909–25? There are those who, like myself, admire Mr. Eliot for the delicacy of his technique in his variations on Jacobean blank verse. Mr. Palmer, I imagine, is a poet who would sacrifice a hundred *ballades* for one ballad, one who does not set great store by technical subtleties. However, in "The Sahara," a mildly entertaining piece in his book (although marred by the schoolboy element), Mr. Palmer succeeds in catching some of the Eliot cadences:

> Ring out wild bells across the snow,
> Ring out, ring out.
> Let the stars join and clawing Ages shout.
> Miching Mallecho. There's wax in Pluto's ears.
> Ring out, Horatio, what a wounded name
> Is scorched upon the sand-corroded pillar,
> In the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar.

In "The Sahara" he succeeds by careful imitation; but the book as a whole fails because Mr. Palmer does not comprehend the technique of those moderns whom he wishes to rout. To understand the spirit which is in a poem we must be aware of the rhythms, the verbal associations and all the symbolic significance of the technique. George Rylands.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Crisis in Australian Finance, 1929-1931. Documents on Budgetary and Economic Policy. With an Introduction by E. O. G. Shann and D. B. Copland. Angus and Robertson. 5s.

This is a most useful collection of documents, embodying the history of the Australian financial crisis from October, 1929, when the Commonwealth Bank first addressed the Federal Government on the seriousness of the situation, to March, 1931. It includes the famous Niemeyer investigation and reports the subsequent controversy inside the Australian Labour Party, the intervention of Mr. Lang with his proposals for repudiation, and all the other relevant papers and statements. The introduction is unfortunately too brief to be of much use. A careful introductory survey of the underlying facts of Australia's economic position would have added greatly to the value of the documents, especially for readers in Great Britain. Presumably the volume was compiled primarily for consumption in Australia.

Himalayan Art. By J. C. French. Introduction by Lawrence Binyon. Oxford University Press. 25s.

"Kangra Valley Civilisation" would perhaps be a better title for this interesting illustrated guide-book by Mr. French, I.C.S., for his field is really limited to the more courtly side of seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century life in the half-dozen hill Rajput States that centre round the Kangra Valley, a hundred miles north-west of Simla. Under the pressure of the successive mediæval Mahommedan invasions Hindu culture was driven for refuge to "our royal allies, the Hills." In the life-and-death struggle for survival it became, as it were, frozen up into archaic patterns; but with the splendid Mogul Empire genial conditions returned, and there flowered a rare art. Mr. French's illustrations, though they cannot reproduce what he and Mr. Binyon call the "clear," "magical," and "radiant" colour of the originals, justify, to an extent, their praise. Mr. French's method is excessively anecdotal, his writing careless, and there is an overdose of uninteresting personal adventure: there is, moreover, very inadequate technical analysis of the paintings, but he is an enthusiast, and many readers will be grateful for this by-product of a busy official's leisure.

Spain in Revolt, 1814-1931. By Joseph McCabe. Lane. 6s.

This is in no sense an original contribution to our knowledge of Spain. Mr. McCabe is only concerned to explain "what is historically behind the attitude of the Spanish people towards the Monarchy and the Church." In this limited task the author has succeeded—perhaps too well, since his sordid record of exploitation and misrule, though indeed endorsed by the most conservative of historians, will hardly seem credible to the ordinary person who takes his ideas of Spain from the daily papers. Because of the utter ignorance of things Spanish over here a legend has grown up that ex-King Alfonso, for example, was "a fine fellow" condemned to an unhappy and sterile reign by the apathy and backwardness of his people. How substantial and constant has been the ferment of ideas, on the contrary, is here made manifest.

Selected List of Autumn Books

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Egyptian Temples. Margaret A. Murray. Sampson Low. 12s. 6d.

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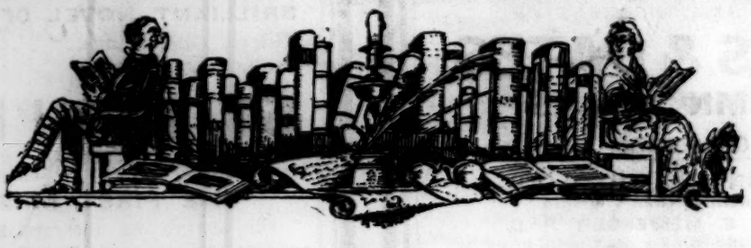

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MR. NEVINSON ON GOETHE

Goethe: Man and Poet. By H. W. NEVINSON. Nisbet. 10s. 6d.

If any Englishman who knows nothing of Goethe should wish to get an idea of what he was like he could not do better than read Mr. Nevinson's book. Goethe used to sigh over his Germans—their pedantry and their professorialism—and still, a hundred years later, we suffer from it. Reading their immense tomes about the poet I have had the uncomfortable impression of a huge corpse buried under washing bills. Goethe himself used to turn for relief, not unmixed perhaps with irony, to the "practical" Englishman who visited Weimar and won the heart of his daughter-in-law. True, he laughed at them too; but he would not have laughed at Mr. Nevinson, who is not only a man of action, a Don Quixote of all good causes, experienced in adventure and in love, but also a devotee of all poetry and art that is sane and alive. He knows his Goethe through and through, though he does not parade his knowledge. He admires his hero, but he does not worship him, and can even laugh at him, which is the surest sign of a true appreciation. And that too Goethe would have liked; for though he was made into a god in his old age, he never wanted to snuff incense. His gravity and pomp were a protective colouring against importunate strangers. Touch his heart or his imagination, and the fires broke out through that crust of Olympian snow.

Mr. Nevinson starts his book with the prophecy of Carlyle written after Goethe's death a hundred years ago. "The highest that can be said of written books is to be said of these. There is in them a new time, the prophecy and beginning of a new time. The cornerstone of a new edifice for man is laid there. Perhaps when Goethe has been read and meditated for another generation these prophecies will not seem so strange." The century has lapsed, for the 22nd of March next is the anniversary of Goethe's death. How then does the prophecy now look?

I do not care to dogmatise, but I have my doubts, and I will venture here to set them down as they occur to me. Goethe, I should say, is less read and known now in England than he was in the earlier part of the nineteenth century. In part this may be due to the war. For in that spelt of passion even Goethe did not escape, and professors, being too old to fight, did "their bit" by explaining that the root of German Hunnishness was to be found in Goethe, the Hun poet. But the spell has passed, or nearly so, and if it has left its mark it is rather on the elderly then on the young; in the last ten years German has been studied again, and young men in Cambridge, and no doubt elsewhere, attend and understand lectures in that tongue. They read Goethe in the course of their studies. What, then, do they think of him?

Do they, to begin with, like his poetry? If they do, they certainly do not imitate it. No one who understands poetry would deny that Goethe was a great lyric poet. But lyric poetry like his is suspect to the young. It is not merely that they cannot write like that, they do not want to; any more than they want to write music like Mozart's or Schubert's. The fashion has changed.

> Freudvoll und leidvoll
> Gedankenvoll sein.

No! too abandoned and ecstatic. And even

> Wer nie sein Brot mit Thränen ass

stops for the young with a jar when it comes to the phrase

> Ihr himmlichen Mächte.

"But *Faust* at least?" "Perhaps some parts of it. But the Gretchen scenes" (says my imaginary youth) "are terribly sentimental and one is rather ashamed of being moved by them. Mephistopheles is good, yes. But all that philosophising? I don't know. It leaves me cold. And when one comes to Part II—well, really! Of course, Goethe was an old man then. But there is a limit to pedantry, even in the old. And the symbolism! And the mysticism at the end! No. I'm sorry! That sort of thing does not appeal to us now!"

"What about the novels then"? "Novels! Well, of course, the novel was in its infancy, and one ought not to expect too much. But do you ask us, who can read Virginia Woolf, to read *Wilheim Meister*, and *Die Wahlverwandschaften*? No! The less said about the novels the better."

"I see you have not much use for Goethe as a man of letters. But consider him as a scientist." "A scientist? A philosopher, if you like, whatever that may be. But a scientist. No! Who can make anything of the *Urpflanze*, and who wants to? Does it exist or does it not? And if it does where is it, that I may dissect it? The intermaxillary bone? Yes, he had a good eye; but, of course, other people had discovered it before him. And as to his theory of colour it was based on a wilful misunderstanding of Newton. No, he had better have stuck to poetry."

"Take him, then, as an administrator. Did he not give ten of the best years of his life to running the little State of Weimar?"

"Weimar? Yes! A little State of some 6,000 inhabitants, with an army of 600, which he reduced by half. What was he doing wasting his time there? Whatever he ought to have been it wasn't an administrator." (As indeed, it must be admitted, he said himself in later life.)

"Well at least you will admit he was a lover!" "Y-e-e-e-s. But rather a queer one. All that business with Frau von Stein. It does not seem to have been one thing or the other. And then, that whole year in Italy without any truck with women! Of course, I admit he made up for it in the second year, and he took a mistress at Weimar. But after that, what a lot of philandering! Minna, Mariana, Ulrike! And nothing doing with any of them, as far as I can make out. And then that about the Ewig Weibliche! Mere Platonism! There was certainly something queer about him!"

Nothing then to be said for him? Rather, everything! For Goethe was a man, and a whole man. Not a specialist, not a tool, but what is almost unknown, except in the very greatest men (a Plato, a Leonardo) a living and devouring synthesis. Granted, if you like, that his poetry is out of fashion, his science out of date, the little State where he lived and worked no bigger than Athens, his loves as often frustrated as not. The fact remains that he was a man, as Napoleon, who was also a man, saw and expressed in the famous interview: "Vous êtes un homme." And by a "man" I do not mean merely "the ordinary sensual man," though Goethe, among other things, was also that; nor the laborious man of science, though he was also that, for he was an untiring collector of facts as well as a synthesiser; nor a student, though he was also that, for the range of his reading was enormous; nor a philosopher, though he was also that; nor a man of the world, though he was also that. He was a master of life—a body beautiful, strong and active; a mind sane and unconfined; a soul straining to its limits and beyond them; saint and sinner, realist and idealist, cynic and enthusiast, optimist and pessimist. Testing everything, recording everything, and always at first hand, he harvested a mass of experience such as few men have garnered, and departed with it at the ripe age of 83—into what? He did not know, but he did not believe it was annihilation. And even if (which I do not think) his poetry should ever be forgotten, he will be remembered for the maxims in which he crystallised his wisdom and of which some of the best are included in Mr. Nevinson's book.

What men are suffering from now is universal scepticism. It is idle to attempt to cure that by calling them back to the past. Those sirens always turn out in the end to be beasts of prey. We must go through and beyond, as Goethe did. There is nothing we have felt which he did not feel. He faced everything, endured everything, doubted, even despaired, but kept burning to the end that hope which is also a faith. His words on his deathbed, "Light, more light" were not intended symbolically; but if they had been they would have expressed the deepest truth about him. He lived for light, and he died in the hope of more light.

G. LOWES DICKINSON.

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The memorialist himself died so long ago as 1743, leaving behind him at Ickworth an autograph copy of his Memorials "remarkably clear and legible" and probably with a direction that there should be some delay in their publication. Lord Hervey's son, who lived to become the third Earl of Bristol, declared by his will that publication should be deferred until the death of King George the Third, a period which was exceeded by a quarter of a century when, in 1848, the Ickworth copy was placed in the ready hands of John Wilson Croker and published by John Murray. Mr. Croker was an editor well acquainted with the indelicacy of the eighteenth century and tried his hardest to make his readers believe that he deplored it. Yet there the indelicacy was staring him in the face; for in his own moving words "the best bred men and the most elegant women, talked and wrote in a style that has long been banished from good society." What was he to do? A Christian man moving in good society? For a moment, but only for a moment, it occurred to Croker that when he came across bawdy and blasphemy he should suppress it. "The total suppression of such passages would be an obvious remedy," but then, was not both he and his equally pious publisher, the friend of Byron, bound to remember that these "very indelicacies are important items towards the history of general manners and the estimate of individual character, and to omit them altogether, or to smooth down such irregularities to our decent level, would be (horrid thought) a deception"? Consequently, but after what perturbation of mind and prayers for guidance from above we cannot tell, Croker and his publisher decided that where suppression was absolutely necessary, suppression there should be, but never any taint of concealment. Therefore the reader of the 1848 edition occasionally comes across "asterisks" which indicate that Mr. Croker has removed some "expression positively offensive to a delicate mind."

In the course of Croker's diggings and delvings, for he was a most industrious editor, he discovered that in 1781, at the request of the Lord Bristol of the day, General Hervey had made a copy of the Ickworth manuscript, which was given to George IV. This copy after being long hidden away at Apsley House (the Duke of Wellington being the legatee of George IV's papers) was discovered in 1912 and deposited in the Royal Archives at Windsor.

The editor of the beautiful edition now under notice had therefore two copies of the Memorials before him. First, the original Ickworth copy, somewhat mangled by the third Lord Bristol, who omitted passages he thought too scandalous and had also obliterated some words he accounted indecent, some of which obliterations the painstaking Croker managed to restore in order to pass his own private judgment upon them; and, secondly, General Hervey's copy at Windsor which also has some omissions, but contains a hundred pages more than the Ickworth copy.

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No! The grip Lord Hervey lays hold of you and retains through life is not occasioned by the value of his historical reflections, or the truth of his philosophy of life, or the charm of his personality, still less by any national pride you may find yourself taking in the historical characters he is portraying (too many of whom are foul-mouthed ruffians, treacherous scoundrels or over-paid, ill-living fools), but in the *movement* of the Court pieces, on, off and across the boards of the National Theatre in the days of George II. As we read these besmirched pages we realise to the full the dangers of Sir Robert Walpole's position and the tottering state of the House of Hanover—the "Family" as Queen Caroline, the Heroine of the Play, always called it.

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Behind this Court group we can hear a scuffle of courtiers, a gaggle of geese, many bearing distinguished names, holding high offices, Dukes, Earls, etc., etc., begartered and adorned, of whom you can say nothing except that is is impossible to believe that they were all quite as bad as Lord Hervey would have us think they were. And yet so lively is his pen and so keen his discernment that, as was once said of the actors in a piece called *We are not so Bad as we Seem*, "You are pretty bad all the same."

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Caroline, and Lord Hervey. We refer to this conversation because Croker omitted it, for reasons easily explained and requiring, in the opinion of many decent people, no defence.

The Queen was at least half convinced that the Prince of Wales was impotent and consequently could never produce an heir to the throne, and she was also completely convinced that if he could not, he would at least do his very best to palm off somebody else's child as his own and thus destroy the chances of her second son William, whom she loved in the exact proportion that she hated Frederick.

The Queen asked Lord Hervey if he could not get some intelligence from Lady Dudley, "You know," said she, "that woman has lain with half the town as well as Fritz, and consequently must know whether he is like other men or not." Lord Hervey replied "that he did not doubt but that there was a way in his power of knowing all Lady Dudley could tell him, but that his curiosity was not strong enough to make him risk his nose to satisfy it."

The Queen said she was excessively anxious upon this head and added "I know his rage to have children is such that there is nothing he is not capable of to gain the point of the Princess being with child. I know he was so solicitous for the reputation of having a child by Miss Vane that, though you have perjured yourself a thousand times by swearing it was not so, yet I am as sure as if I had heard him do it, that he asked you to get one for him—hold your tongue—I will not hear you tell any more lies upon that head." "I am not going," interrupted Lord Hervey, "to speak upon that head, but I beg leave to say that even supposing it to be true there would surely be a great difference between asking a man to be with one's mistress than asking him to be with one's wife? . . . " "I am sure" replied the Queen, "if you were to undertake it you could contrive, though I know not how you would go about it, to do it without her knowledge." . . . "Nothing so easy" replied Lord Hervey. "My God, how is it possible?" said the Queen.

Here the quotation must stop, for of course when it came to the point Lord Hervey declined to commit, however easily it could be done, high treason, even at the bidding of his "Great, good and amiable Queen."

And so the conversation eventually ended. "*Au bout du conte*," said the Queen, "I know not what to think, but altogether I know it makes me very uneasy."

An uneasiness which we confess we share—with her late Majesty Caroline the Great.

Augustine Birrell.

GIVING AWAY THE TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Houdini's Escapes. By W. B. Gibson. Philip Allan. 10s. 6d.

The stage owes a grudge to modern journalism for having given away so many of the tricks of the trade: and it seems to me strange that a profession so strong as the theatrical profession should have failed, thirty years ago, to represent to the profession of journalism the material damage the Stage might suffer if any more articles appeared, explaining how the actor paints his face, how the thunder is done, how the lightning, how the snow, the rain, the wind, and so on.

Such things have, of course, been published as far back as 1600, when the Italians explained how to make a stage sun, how to make clouds and dragons move, and so forth. But these books only reached a very few readers, and were but text-books prepared specially for students and workmen in the theatre.

The first real offender who popularised some of the secrets was Diderot. His *Encyclopædia*, although a large book, was spread far and wide. In it he explained how to do all sorts of things—including the trick of bringing on the big God, creaking in his car through the clouds.

It wouldn't have mattered if it could have ended there, but it didn't. From the time of Diderot onwards the tricks have all been given away—and now something has to be done about it.

Nobody now believes in the old ghost, rising up through the floor of the stage, which was once done so convincingly—first, I believe, by the people in France, then copied by Charles Kean and then by Irving (in *The Corsican Brothers*, for example), but always done effectively. That trick has been explained away, and people no longer get quite the same thrill, though a bit of the thrill will always remain. But no *bit* of a thrill is sufficient to help fill a playhouse—it must be a sensational and complete thrill for the house to be sold out.

Journalism has not been content merely to report the stage effects—it must be giving away the works. Turntable stages are nothing new—they have been used for a century or so in Japan, and in Europe since (at least) fifty-three years ago—but now that it is being explained how they work, and that they are turntable stages, people are beginning to get interested in them, and promising to grow tired of them—for once a trick is well known it becomes a bore.

It is a pleasant thing to think of the co-operation between Stage and Press . . . the Stage likes to open its private door to all reporters who ask to see the latest thing behind the scenes; and so long as the distinction between reporting and blabbing is observed, there seems no reason why the doors should not be thrown wide open.

But if the journalists give away our secrets, and thus take the gilt off the gingerbread and the gold out of the box-office, by rendering the public blasé about these things, so that it keeps away from our Theatre, then it seems to me almost time for the heads of the theatrical profession to have a little private conference with the heads of journalism and see if something can't be done.

The journalist would say: "Invent new tricks which baffle us, and then, however many reporters we send, you'll have the pull over us!"

And, to take a simple example, something a little like this has been done by the men who have invented the new stages and new systems of lighting in Germany and Sweden and elsewhere. The journalists are shown the boxes from which the light comes—the sides of the boxes are opened and the mechanism revealed, but nobody—not the most skilful journalist—can tell how the thing is done, for all that. Bravo! M. André and Messieurs Hasaité, Piscator, and a few more!

But I would like to see journalists perplexed by some less complicated tricks, as slight as those done by the really astonishing conjuror . . . some slight little trick like the vanishing egg, or the transformation of water into ten or fifteen different wines. I have seen everyone baffled by these two tricks.

But the trick which utterly confounds the whole world is the artist's trick. James Stephens writes a poem and puts it under our noses, and nobody can tell how it's done—hundreds try to do it, and not one can succeed. Vaughan Williams and Martin Shaw write a couple of bars of music: thousands of copies come under the inspection of the curious—who may strive till Doomsday to capture the trick, and fail over and over again.

And a really fine actor, of course, can and therefore should more often do something like the same thing. But it is the fantastic side of the stage, its scenic side, which needs reviving, and for which a "new technique" (to use a modern phrase), a quite new technique, needs to be invented. Last year's "new technique" is old, since the journalists have given it away. And, unfortunately, when a manager bitten with the ambition to produce Shakespeare for the first time tells the public that he is going to stage Shakespeare with all the splendour of scenic show, it merely means that he is going to imitate something which has been done five, ten, or fifteen years ago.

So, then, the only worth-while, the only profitable producer is he who can do something under the very nose of the public and the journalists, as do the poets and musicians . . . and something which need not be patented, since in real magic there is nothing to patent—something which, if done by a true artist, can become as expressive as it can become foolish if done by one of the many fakirs of the London circus. It is, of course, quite unnecessary, at this time of day, to explain that a fakir, or faker, and an artist are two different things, and that when they do their tricks the faker's can always be fathomed and the artist's never.

But for all their shallowness, I regret that, at the death of Houdini, it was decided that his tricks—and how he did them, too—should be revealed in a book with diagrams. They are now seen to be far from baffling, and altogether mechanical, and excessively elaborate. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle always claimed that Houdini was in league with spirits—a claim which Houdini always ridiculed. He claimed that all he did was done by sheer human skill: but he kept secret the precise method of his many tricks.

We are now told that it was mostly a matter of artful boxes with false sides or tops—hinges which were open locks, and locks which were hidden hinges—and that the "escapes" depended more upon the amateur conjuror's complicated apparatus, and less on the skilled artist's conjuring.

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But for all this, I am sorry that in this book we have the truth revealed, and if something is not done we may expect future audiences to applaud the trick box itself, and its makers, and, on paying for their tickets, to insist on seeing how the tricks are done, twice over—first rapidly, and with every delusion possible, secondly, slowly, and openly showing how it was done.

That will be a great pity—and now is, perhaps, the time to prevent it. Or is it still too early or too late to prevent anything?

Edward Gordon Craig.

THE OTHER SIDE

The Supernatural Omnibus. Edited by M. Summers. Gollancz. 5s.

The Place of the Lion. By Charles Williams. Mundanus. 3s.

The question may arise, of course, whether there is any other side; but I do not know that this doubt is of much consequence, so far as literature is concerned. It is certain that, even now, a vast number of people believe firmly in a region beyond the visible and material walls of the world. Many, again, believe vaguely in something that surpasses weight and measure; others are almost convinced that Hamlet was right and that we do not yet understand the whole scheme of the universe. The people who are sure that there is nothing but matter are negligible; and, indeed, the wall against which they lean is behaving in a strange way, and threatening to turn behind their backs first into energy, and then into mind. I think we may fairly assume that for the purposes of literature a ghost is every bit as good as a grocer. The one rule applies equally to both examples: our ghost must be made credible, and so must our grocer. I cannot recall any instance at the moment; but I am sure that the printed page must harbour many grocers who are quite incredible.

The credibility, naturally, must be the credibility of art, not of life. It is a very bad compliment to the writer of a good tale to profess that it must all be true, that he is a reporter of facts. This is the old story of Zeuxis, the grapes, and the birds in another form. We know that the clever effigies of the waxwork are not sculpture, and that the best of theatre backcloths are not paintings. These aim at delusion; the arts seek to produce illusion. If the scene in the play is well devised, the gallery feels that it could walk up the garden path; but the case of Turner would have to be weighed even more seriously if a man were seen attempting to climb one of his mountains at the National Gallery. Some years ago a good many people tried to climb up a hillock of mine, situate near Mons; and I have been unhappy about it ever since.

Mr. Montague Summers, editor of *The Supernatural Omnibus*, handling this question of credibility in his Introduction, quotes Dr. James. The reader of the story of the supernatural, says Dr. James, must be put into the position of saying to himself: "If I'm not very careful, something of this kind may happen to me!" Very good; but I would rather indicate the right frame of mind by the reflection: "Something like this may have happened a long time ago in England, or may be happening now in Finland or Lapland, or may have happened to that man the Smiths used to talk about." I think we like to keep ourselves out of our favourite ghost-stories, to regard them as possible, perhaps, but not likely to fall into our own experience. And, after all, the credibility of marvellous, ghostly, magical tales is according to another order altogether. In a sense we believe that the pointed splash of white and green and brown paint on the canvas is a mountain 10,000 feet high, though a footrule may assure us that it measures exactly $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches. And so we begin "The Turn of the Screw"—that masterpiece of the secret world—knowing, if you please, that it is all a pack of lies, and reading every word of it, rapt out of actuality, only eager to know what happened next, what the end is to be. At the same moment, it seems, we firmly believe and firmly disbelieve; we are in a state of mind that is more mysterious than the most mysterious tale.

And this, I believe, is the state of mind which the artist in wonder should endeavour to induce in his subject, the reader. There are all sorts of ways and methods and means of doing this; and, as usual, all sorts of opinions as to the right way and the wrong way. Mr. Summers holds that amongst living artists in this kind the most successful are Dr. James and Vernon Lee; and, so far as Dr. James is concerned, at all events, I believe he has the great majority of readers with him. I differ profoundly from this judgment. Both these writers are scholarly in their knowledge and in their manner of using it, but their tales seem to me academic exercises in ghostly things. They say "Open barley," "Open oats," "Open wheat," with exact, measured, and melodious accents; but never "Open sesame": and the door into the wonderful cave remains closed. Dr. James is not represented in *The Supernatural Omnibus*; but there is a tale by Vernon Lee, called "Amour Dure." I had no sort of belief in the magic *idolino* or in the ghost, and read on without a shudder, but when all was done I felt mildly instructed in the ways of the Italian Renaissance. So far as living authors are concerned, I support with all enthusiasm the claims of Mr. Algernon Blackwood. There is a story in "John Silence," a story of modern times, about certain evil brethren of a German teaching community, workers of all abomination in the flesh and in the spirit, long shamefully dead, but restored to a horrible life and to their nameless operations for a brief season. The apparition of Asmodelius, the Hauptbruder—his true name, as Mr. Blackwood knows, is Aschmoddai—is a terror that is worthy to be compared with the appearance of the young man with eyes of infinite sadness in "Aut Diabolus aut Nihil." And, again, there is the tale of "The Willows" by the same author. In this all the old rules, all the old technique, of the occult game are laid aside. "The Willows" grow in an undiscovered country, uncharted by any explorer before Mr. Blackwood. Two young men are camping on an island on the Danube. It seems one morning that there is a willow bush where there had only been bare sand the day before; and day by day the willows draw nearer and nearer to the camp. The terror is vague, inexplicable, without precedent in the science of the shadows: and all the more dreadful for its vagueness.

Without precedent; but I think it might well be made a precedent for future explorers of the world beyond the veil. Let them forget all they have learnt of the occult sciences, all the familiar formulas which are too familiar to strike awe any longer. It is a doubtful speculation; but it is barely possible that the ghosts, the elementals, the familiar spirits, the possessing spirits, the fairies, all the mythology, as it were, of the other side are personifications, the best that could be found, it may be, of forces that veritably exist, though they can neither be named nor known. For example, I have never been able to make up my mind as to that too familiar spirit, the poltergeist. For all I know it may be nothing but trickery. It may be that adolescence all over the world—though that is mysterious enough—is irresistibly moved to fling things about, to smash, to bump, to break, to make itself extremely unpleasant and inconvenient. It may be also that this universal adolescence is gifted with the trick of doing this so secretly that the method is not found out. This may be the explanation: or possibly not. But at all events I prefer it, since, as I say, it is sufficiently mysterious, to the official talk of elementals, which explains nothing and pretends to explain everything; which assumes a science where there is, in fact, no science. Nothing is more irritating than the occultist who talks with the assurance of an analytical chemist. The true point of view, I would suggest, is to regard the human cosmos as a world with undiscovered, unconjectured regions, as the centre of powers of which we know nothing or next to nothing, of forces which are only manifested rarely, in one individual, let us say, out of a hundred thousand, or, if you like, out of a million. Spiritualism is a doctrine concerning the dead and a science of summoning the spirits of the dead. I believe no word either of the science or the doctrine; I have no doubt that a vast proportion of the spiritualistic phenomena are produced by deliberate fraud. But I am inclined to think that there is a certain remnant of manifestations with which fraud is not concerned; and behind the raps and apports of the séance and the bangs and projections of the poltergeist I suspect there is a common cause. Here, I would submit, is the dim and shadowy and half-conjectured field most fit for the inventor of strange fables.

And so with the fairies; they have been photographed of recent years, and the camera has thoroughly confirmed the views of producers of pantomime as to gauzy wings, short skirts, and so forth. And the late Mr. Sinnett, the eminent theosophist, knew all about them. He explained that they were employed in flower-fertilisation, and were about as intelligent as a Newfoundland dog. But, apart from these follies, there are, perhaps, true fairy tales. There appeared in *Light* some months ago an account of the adventures of a party of six tourists who climbed Mount Nephin in County Mayo, in July, 1929. The story is

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NOEL DOUGLAS

too long to tell here; but it is an extraordinary one. The travellers were beguiled, illuded, led astray. They heard the sound of crying, as of a lost child. "Someone laughed"; but no laugher was to be seen. "She said it was as though there were *no time* for a moment, and some strange force were pulling her away: she does not know, cannot possibly imagine, what happened to her."

And I do not know, cannot possibly imagine, what happened to her. But I believe her story; and I would direct the teller of wonders to seek the heights of Mount Nephim—without a camera, without a manual of theosophy.

Here, at least, is one who has adventured into untrodden territory. I do not think that Mr. Charles Williams, in his *The Place of the Lion*, has succeeded in bringing down the archtypes, the creative Ideas, from their platonic heaven to the earth; but it is a brave adventure. Arthur Machen.

ROUSSEAU

Rousseau: The Child of Nature. By John Charpentier. Methuen. 15s.

The wanderings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau came to an end in 1897. His body, as has happened to other wanderers, had its own cycle of adventures after his death. First carved up for the purposes of an autopsy, then quietly entombed in the Isle of Poplars, it was moved in 1794 to the Panthéon, where, over a hundred years later, the leaden coffin was opened by officials, and a historian who was present at the ceremony caught a glimpse of his features before they crumbled. Meanwhile, his visions and his ideas had spread in an epidemic across Europe. Self-proclaimed the weakest of living men, his very weakness had become a source of strength. There was something in the nature of the malady that the contemporary constitution could not withstand. He acted upon the men and women of his age like the carrier of some yet unknown disease. It seems as extraordinary nowadays that they should have succumbed, as that whole islands in the Pacific should have been depopulated by the introduction of chicken-pox.

To understand the revolution he brought about, we must also know something of his period, and realise that the lip-service it paid to Reason did not preclude the wildest growth of private cults. Charlatanism in a thousand forms was rampant, while every type of adventurer and quack—the Casanovas, Cagliostros and their kin—crowded to levy toll upon the credulous. Not that Rousseau was by any means a charlatan; for the undoubted strain of hypocrisy in his constitution was almost entirely unconscious and untutored. It came naturally to him to behave as he often did, and anything that came *naturally* to Jean-Jacques came, of course, doubly recommended.

Both the fascination and the inadequacy of his work have to do with that predominant characteristic. Somewhere, deeply seated in his brain, was a voice which said that the *natural* was the *right*, always, under any set of circumstances. No author has accused himself more thoroughly, but few with a bitterness less genuine. He weeps, he prostrates himself, he grovels; yet even when his indictment is most unsparing a touch of queer complacency will peep through. His conduct, as he remembers it, was quite natural—not very nice nor very dignified; but then, the natural man is none of these things. He seems to be pitting his entire strength against the reticences which make civilised life possible, employing his gifts of pathos and of rhetoric to level the whole world to his own plane, to persuade grown-ups to forget the use of chairs and join him on the carpet and beneath the table. Then all men would be happy and all free—all moral thumb-suckers together.

Modern literature, at the instigation of Jean-Jacques, has done a great deal of odd prying among the table-legs. Many critics have told it peremptorily to come out—Professor Babbitt, for example, in *Rousseau and Romanticism*—while Mr. Charpentier in the book under review paints a horrid picture of its naughty little friend. As a biography this volume might have been more satisfying with a less excited and better-tempered style. Mr. Charpentier reminds one of an old nurse who would "like to get her hands on Master Rousseau!" He is almost too truculent in his disapproval, and by refusing to let the story tell itself is inclined to lose sight of its main significance.

For it is not the "immorality" they reveal—his practice of abandoning his children and lying and sentimentalising about it afterwards—that makes the earlier volumes of the *Confessions* so absorbing and yet so repulsive a human study. Other men have abandoned bastard children, and put it on record and been forgiven by the world. As an immoralist, Jean-Jacques was inconspicuous. What poisoned his life and tainted his book was not the simple fact of his delinquency so much as the moral background which set it off. His constant pre-occupation with the good life gave the life he led a touch of added grimness. Failure, ignominy, desperation—in spite of everything he managed to preserve a childish faith in the existence of his own virtue. He *was* virtuous. Nobody should deny it! It was not Jean-Jacques but society which was at fault. Hence his dream of a vanished Golden Age when such "innocence" as his would have flowered splendidly.

Meanwhile, he did his best to disarm criticism by a complete shamelessness with regard to his own faults. Granted he had been shifty and mendacious; but . . . and the "but" which follows is immense. A reader must either accept it or stop short there; but whether personally he accepts or rejects Rousseau, the prophet's influence will still haunt him at every turn. For Rousseau imposed on the nineteenth century an entirely new form of moral hygiene. Publicity from now on was the great purifier; everything which was admitted might be excused All windows—and all the drains—were to be thrown open. The result? Among other things, the modern novel.

Rousseau, like many great reformers, owed his success to the sheer simplicity of his design. He was, as he claimed to be, a child of nature, rather backward, with an engaging streak of idiotism, and yet a genius with the power to move the world. His career, examined from a certain angle, resolves itself into an attempt to regain childhood. One of his most disturbingly pleasurable memories was of a whipping which a schoolmistress had administered. Later, there was "Maman," Madame de Warens; later still, Madame d'Houdetot in her riding boots. . . . The state of tutelage was for him the state of happiness. All his life he searched for somebody to "mother" him, some woman who would assume "Maman's" place. The pleasures and privileges he had foregone were to colour the strange philosophy he elaborated.

But it is not only among the great achievements of modern literature, but also in its by-paths and popular vagaries, that traces of Rousseau's influence are to be found. Let us not forget that, in the twilight of education, before the advent of Rousseau and *Émile*, children were usually regarded by their elders as immature specimens of male and female. The Child was not enthroned as a separate entity. The worship of childhood was not yet inaugurated. Children were then encouraged to grow up. The horrifying growth of child-literature was still unguessed-at among the evils of modern life. . . . If he looks down from his bassinette in heaven, what does Rousseau think of J. M. Barrie? Peter Quennell.

FRESH LIGHTS ON THE WAR BY LAND

Foch: The Man of Orleans. By Liddell Hart. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 21s.

Albert King of the Belgians in the Great War. By Lieut.-General Galet, H.M.'s Military Adviser. Putnam. 25s.

Captain Liddell Hart, who has by successive books been steadily building up during recent years a solid reputation as a military writer, has here accomplished something bigger than before—in fact, something very big indeed. It is the first serious attempt made in English (and perhaps the most penetrating in any language) to get at the facts of Foch's career from first to last and to estimate them critically. The author has received large assistance from both the French and British Staffs, including access to unpublished documents; and he acknowledges a particular obligation to General Weygand. But he has not thought necessary to requite it by applying any sort of whitewash to his subject. His exposures of facts are quite ruthless. The results are in detail iconoclastic, though this is far from being the effect of the book as a whole.

What it is like can be best seen from a sample. Here, for instance, is Captain Liddell Hart's summary of Foch's part in First Ypres—a battle for which he and the late Lord French divide the credit in popular legend. After emphasising that it was mainly an Inkerman—a soldiers' battle without leadership—

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and adding that its "real handling" (so far as there was any) was left to Haig and Dubois, he proceeds:

> Foch undoubtedly had a moral influence on the battle, no less by his obstinate refusal to listen to reason than by the unconquerable strength of his will. This never wilted. Detach it from the actual ebb and flow of the battle-line, and we can admire it unreservedly. It made an impression on all who came in contact with it. But one is not able to detect any point at which it touched the men in the battle-line. And where it touched the fighting commanders the effect seems to have become a source more of exasperation than of exaltation.
>
> The one sure point where Foch's will fortified another will was at the back of the front—at the allied general headquarters. While some of the claims made for its influence on the Belgian command may be discounted, especially in regard to King Albert, they cannot be disregarded. On Sir John French the influence is more measurable, but here the measure of its effect is inevitably as infinitesimal as Sir John French's influence on the battle.

In passing we may note that if one judges Lord French as severely as Captain Liddell Hart does one is bound to attach a very heavy responsibility to Foch for having played a leading—perhaps the chief—part in thwarting Kitchener's plan to supersede him. What makes it the worse is that his methods involved a most dishonourable breach of Kitchener's confidence.

Very good are the chapters devoted here to Foch's pre-war teaching and influence at the École de Guerre, and a long Appendix analysing his theory of war. It is plain enough to-day, not merely that Foch's early ideas were at many points wildly wrong (chiefly because his study of military history had been far too narrow, being practically confined to certain campaigns of Napoleon and Moltke), but that they had a most pernicious effect on France's pre-war military evolution. It was Foch's "prize pupil," Colonel de Grandmaison, who with the rest of Foch's "Young Turks" overthrew General Michel, and replaced the Michel Plan, which in the light of after events is seen to have been a most admirable one, by the egregious Plan XVII, which only the wobblings of the younger Moltke prevented from entailing the complete ruin of France. Nor is anyone more to blame than Foch for the worship of the offensive at all costs which entailed such appalling casualties in August, 1914, and indeed much later. Foch himself remained seriously enslaved to his own root-fallacies down to 1915, when his costly and futile operations in Artois reflected their influence. Later he learned more wisdom; he disapproved Nivelle's offensive, which was the last French folly on the grand scale; and he disapproved also the even later and far more obstinate infatuation under which Haig perpetrated the tragedy of Passchendaele.

What, then, were Foch's strong points? First and foremost, his "moral" force, his will. To read his pre-war books, you might think that any General would win who was sufficiently determined to. It was, of course, an exaggeration; Foch always underrated material factors. Not only was this so in the early days, when he and his disciples hurled flesh and blood uselessly against machine-guns, but even in the war's last winter he despised tanks—it was Pétain who, fortunately for France, insisted on having them. Nevertheless, the "moral" factor in war, if not the only one, is very big, and on this side Foch was a veritable tower. If it is ultimately true—as perhaps it is—that France owed it to sheer will that she survived and at last retrieved her unparalleled disasters, then no one, not even Clemenceau, contributed more to that result than he. This quality in him gave rise to strange paradoxes, as Captain Liddell Hart shows; but there it was.

Secondly, he had an extraordinary tact in dealing with fellow-officers. No other Allied General was so successful in that way. Curiously, his Catholic, dogmatic, *a priori* mind got on particularly well with the empirical Anglo-Saxons—alike with the difficult Pershing and the ductile French, the shallow nimble Henry Wilson, and the stolid Haig. Here was the main secret of his success in the last year of the war. His "strategy" has been overrated in the popular verdict. Captain Liddell Hart, though full of admiration for this phase in Foch's career, points out again and again

> the limitations which high command suffered under the conditions of the World War. The effective influence of the higher commander was thwarted by the difficulty not only of knowing the facts of the situation, but of knowing them in time to take action which fitted them—before they had changed.

Many other features of this remarkable book might be underlined—for instance, its penetrating account of Foch's pre-war influence over Henry Wilson and of Wilson's resultant influence on British war policy. Here, as elsewhere, what is most striking is the power and suggestiveness of the author's comment on the military principles involved. Everywhere one finds evidence of long, deep persistent thought, testing and revaluing the old generalisations, and never burking the facts where they point to new ones. Conceived and executed on a large scale, the study seems singularly mature throughout. Nor does it lack vivid and intimate personal touches.

General Galet's book is also of first-rate importance in another way. It is official, in the sense that King Albert has personally approved it; and consequently it is not fully outspoken on political points—*e.g.*, on Belgian party rivalries before the war. But the details of military reorganisation are clearly explained; and they enable the reader to understand (as perhaps few in this country yet have) the quite peculiarly handicapped state in which the Belgian Army took the field in 1914. General (then Captain) Galet was the King's "officer-in-waiting" from November, 1912, onwards; and he knows all the ins and outs of military policy from that time absolutely at first hand.

The military operations here described are those of 1914 only; the story ends with the stabilisation on the Yser. The campaign repays study, and has generally received less than it deserves.

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Yet truth of the higher order is not discredited by multiplicity of aspects, for if the essence of religion consists in a personal relation between man and his Maker, to seek in it the impersonal certitude of abstract science will be utterly vain. It may, however, be only another form of the same error to suppose that the single approach to the "the holy" is through a special susceptibility, analogous, perhaps, to the distinctive appreciation of music. Something of this kind has been propounded with great ability by Dr. Otto, whose new book is mainly an exposition of older writers akin to himself, especially of Jacob Fries, a critical disciple of Kant, contemporary with Jacobi, Schleiermacher, and others of that generation, whose reputation has somewhat eclipsed his own. His *Wissen, Glaube und Ahndung* (1805), supplemented by other works enumerated by Otto, insists on the uniqueness of faith, without allowing the Kantian antithesis of faith and knowledge. Faith itself, he maintains, must be knowledge, and the real implication of Kant's "ideas of reason" is that truth is attainable outside the phenomenal world to which science is confined. *Ahndung* (or *Ahnung*) is "man's deepest need and longing." Otto compares it to Plato's "anamnesis," and speaks of it as the revelation of truth in feeling, with the proviso that feeling is not to be taken as the merely subjective sense of the agreeable, but as a mode of judgment, claiming objectivity for itself, just as the declaration that a work of art is beautiful is never *intended* to be a mere expression of personal taste. In Fries, too, Otto finds and applauds the doctrine that religion is inevitably and finally mysterious, not with the darkness that pales in the dawn of science, but rather with the light that veils the unapproachable throne.

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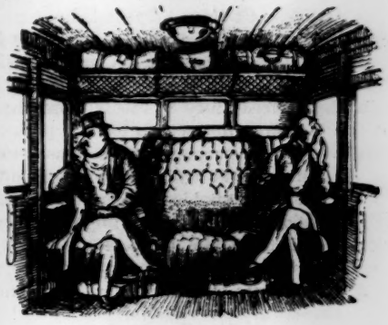

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perception." The case, however, is not so simple as he appears to think. "It will at once occur," he says, "to every reader who is familiar with the Gospels that Jesus Himself lays all the emphasis, not on knowledge, but on will." Yet many of the greatest among Christian doctors, men as familiar with the Gospels as with the air they breathed, have proclaimed the priority of intellect over will. By "knowledge," indeed, they did not mean mathematics, nor even metaphysics; but in describing the vision of God as *il ben dell' intelletto* they affirmed the vital truth that Christianity is much more than an ethical system. Dr. Gardner does not set up to be a philosopher. The breadth of his charity is, perhaps, more conspicuous than his perception of difficulties, and when he wanders off into a discourse on telepathy, with analogies between broadcasting and the diffusion of religious influence, we might suggest that he is straying quite as far from the Gospels as the intellectualists whom he is inclined to mistrust.

With no wine to promote the flow of truth, and no Socrates to furnish ironic commentary or celestial vision, a "symposium" lacks something of its great original. What it amounts to here is that an Anglican, a Jesuit and a Free Church minister contribute essays to the same volume, one and all protesting that the citadel of salvation is undisturbed by the manœuvres of natural science. If we ask where exactly the citadel is established, Father d'Arcy at least has no doubt about the answer. Ecclesiastical politics, however, are kept in the background, and each of the writers points out in his own way that the truths of religion are not greatly affected by the behaviour of electrons or the magnitude of the stars. Very wisely, too, none of them offers to recast the faith in terms of a quasi-scientific philosophy. Past attempts of that kind have proved disastrous, and even the hackneyed affair of Galileo needs a little explaining away.

Since Dr. William Brown assures us, in his prefatory note, that Mr. Lang "has a sound grasp of the general principles of modern psychology," we are bound to take his word for it, even though it only confirms the suspicion that psychology is more concerned with the description of phenomena than with any further question of truth. The bulk of the book consists of anecdotes about religious persons, eminent or obscure, who experienced conversion. The practical climax appears to be reached in the advice to Protestant Churches to adopt the Rosary as a means of auto-suggestion. Mr. Lang even adds in a footnote that "he can supply a form of Rosary for use in the Anglican Communion, price 2d." But surely he is forgetting the financial crisis. "Conversion" is in the air, and though twopence is a fair price for Nonconformists, we sincerely hope that he will contrive a scheme for supplying this valuable instrument of devotion at not more than three-halfpence to members of the Established Church.

AMIEL AND PHILINE

Philine. By Henri Frédéric Amiel. Translated by Van Wyck Brooks. Constable. 10s. 6d.

Mrs. Humphry Ward's Amiel (if we allow the proprietorship) had no Philine. Those meditations on the bank of Geneva, the long walks through autumn woods, the scenic splendour of a casement sky which shone on the professor in his study, pen in hand, the diarist *sub specie aeternitatis*; they reflected many facets of the writer's mind; they lit recesses in which a thwarted humanity moved through the sequences of a sort of dream *Hamlet*, from which effective action had been abstracted; but in all this soliloquy there was not one word about Love. If Amiel was ever in love, one knew that it must have been thwarted love; but from Mrs. Humphry Ward's carefully proportioned figure the traces were absent. Her purpose was to show his safe passage "through the labyrinth of doubt into the presence of the Eternal." He must be shown against a background of sunsets —but alone, of course alone. To be always a doubter before life—that was admissible in a philosopher and moralist, and even lent an extra glow: but to be hesitating for a woman, to be fiddling on and off with an affair, that was weakness deplorably different. There were one or two passages in which he admitted the absurdity of his ever "settling down," becoming a husband and a father—the part would not suit him at all, the mere thought of it started a whole machinery of odd disjointed emotions. So his dissatisfaction was left vague, and confined to general reflections on the quest of the ideal, the importance of self and escape from self.

The revelation of such a mind, continually at war with itself, and expressed in its own acute and delicate terms, was fascinating and unlike any previous attempt at self-portraiture: a fine inner flowering of the mind, beautiful and intricate, drawing its nourishment from the will, living like a cancer. Amiel saw it and confessed more than once that he possessed too much insight and too little character. But there it was; motion was difficult and one must make the most of the plants and corals in one's own submarine world. It is with a singular unaffected nobility that Amiel writes down his hopes and passions; elaborately yet always with truth. The emotions which with other men mostly precede performance were in his case final, not from choice, but necessity. To say that he luxuriated in moods or was a connoisseur of states of mind is to take a shallow view of him. He was almost completely without pose; his thought was always serious (never merely "striking"), his emotions genuine. Nothing would be farther from the truth than to regard him as a self-conscious Hamlet or day-dreaming artist. He was not playing a part for what it was worth, either in his life or his writings. His friends hardly noticed him beyond to wonder that he did not publish more books, and the revelation of the *Journal* after his death was an accident which he might have regarded with indifference. Yet, for all this isolation from the world of the part of him which was his genius, he was not a recluse. He enjoyed good company and conversation, and if he also liked the solitude of nature and his writing desk, he was not unlike other philosophers whose duty compels them to the audiences of lecture-rooms. Quite apart from the paralysing inaction of his character, he was contemplative by nature, a man who accepted the experiences that came to him rather than one who sought fresh experience. As a record of philosophic and religious experience alone the *Journal* is extraordinary; and the insinuation with every thread of it of the living man makes it a masterpiece unequalled in modern times except perhaps by Strindberg's autobiography. So much was given of Amiel in Mrs. Humphry Ward's edition of 1885; *Philine* adds to the portrait a few lively and unexpected, but entirely characteristic, strokes.

There are touches almost of caricature. The diarist is no longer always a voice against a landscape or the sky, but one gets glimpses of a middle-ageing, particular, invalidish, nice, quiet gentleman, whose beard and gentle tones and sympathetic confessor ways have charmed a small circle of women and driven several into the frantic transports of love. They make no secret of it when speaking to him; he listens carefully, disturbed by this "faint summons." First of all, at the age of thirty-eight he reflects that he is still virgin: that is surely ludicrous, an unnecessary priggishness for a man of his years; and will not an experience or two improve him in every way? He is on the brink, too, of love; loved and disturbed by the omens of galvanic response. And he is getting old! How many New Years' Eves has he sat up late, tuning his flutes and putting them in order for a year which brings him nothing new? The discomforts of a bachelor's life in a *pension* press hard on him.

> Last night was abominable. I was almost made ill by the damp plaster and I scarcely closed my eyes for two hours. Decamped in the middle of the night from my homicidal alcove (on the second floor) and bivouacked among the chairs of my tower of Babel in the midst of the fresh varnish of my future wainscotting. In short, with two apartments and forty trunks of baggage, I could neither sleep nor sit down anywhere. My whole day consumed in nothings, annoyances, and the arrangement of details. I had to manufacture curtains and other idiocies worthy of Robinson Crusoe.

Philine, whom he has known for years, is in love with him, and will become his wife or his mistress when he likes; he, perhaps, loves her. Yet the years go on. They meet, talk, correspond, plan for the future. At first their intimacies are fresh and surprising; fifteen years later they are behaving like old lovers. He still wonders, hesitates: she is more than ever devoted to him. Resignation becomes more and more a part of their relationship. He writes in his diary:

> O Clot., Sar., Alex., Eriph., Eger., how are you revenged! I have always awaited the divine sign, the voice from above, the infallible warning. And here the sign, the voice, the warning have failed me. I am wedded only to the ideal.

So, with an absurd tenderness, it ends.

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We are so accustomed to take people's names for granted that only a very unusual name can jog us out of our normal apathy, and even so our curiosity rarely overcomes us so far as to inquire into its origin. Most people, while respecting the learning and enthusiasm of authorities like Mr. L'Estrange Ewen, would say that the game is not worth the candle. For onamatology, or the study of appellatives, like other side-tracks of knowledge, seems to marshal vast stores of information to no particular end. Mr. Ewen pleads for the recognition of this science as a contribution to such major sciences as geography and enthology, apart from its usefulness to the biographer and genealogist. Whether we share these views in whole or in part, his careful and systematic survey contains enough interesting material to attract the most phlegmatic reader.

A love of statistics and some detective skill are essential to the student of onamatology. Mr. Ewen's love of statistics amounts to a passion, which some of his readers may not be able to share unless they have patience enough to wade through the long lists of names he has extracted from innumerable early records. Even so, a wide range of evidence of this kind does not carry one very far into an extraordinarily complicated subject; generalisation, however convincing, rarely throws a very penetrating light on the individual case, and there are many names missing in Mr. Ewen's long index that cannot be fitted into any general group. But an examination of groups, with examples, is the most that we can expect, since every name really needs a chapter, if not a book to itself, for, as Mr. Ewen remarks, a name by itself proves nothing, and its origin can only be deduced from an amply documented genealogy.

Names are only labels and were originally a convenient method of describing a man; all names, therefore, were once descriptions. Kapipravara (Sanskrit) was the man "having the excellent monkey," but the name died with him, if not with the ape. Many centuries were to pass before names were transmitted from father to son and from generation to generation, before they were to become surnames in the modern sense. In the British Isles surnames do not appear to have existed before the Conquest, and not until the thirteenth century was it a general rule for a man to have two names. Until then he had to be content with a single appellative, often a mere nickname to differentiate him from other animals in the herd. But very early names began to fall into one of four classes, and it is these classes and the distribution of names among them that Mr. Ewen examines in detail from the tenth until the close of the seventeenth century. The commonest of them contains names that answer to the question: Where does he live? Bearing in mind the danger to which we have referred of generalising from a specific name, we might select, as examples, simple appellatives from place-names such as Carrington and Penrose, or Keynes, which probably derives from the town of Cahaignes in Normandy; then there is the kind of name derived from a locality, such as the compound Braithwaite, meaning a broad-clearing. The second class reveals to what family a man belongs; in this are included fitz-names and those more numerous ones that end in *son*, as Davidson and Jackson. Names which describe a man's calling fall into a third class: Hayward, Marshall, Forster (a forester). In the last division we find names that record a physical or moral quality of the original owner; these are the rarest and include such names as Kennedy (ugly head) and Hardy (handsome). Until the end of the fourteenth century names in these classes were still commonly preceded by the preposition *of* or the article *le* or *the*. Thereafter appellatives that began as personal descriptions tend to become proper surnames, held by each member of a family and transmitted to their posterity.

There are, of course, innumerable complications in the way of tracking down a surname to its origin, chief among which is probably the influence of migrations and the confusion consequent upon foreign names becoming established in England in anglicised forms. There is also the error of scribes to be taken into consideration; such a name as Earp has lost its original signification probably through faulty transcription, while Bocage Walk by a phonetical twist has become for ever Birdcage Walk. Further confusion arises in the use of suffixes (*e.g.*, single suffix, Birrell; double suffix, Tomlin), and the interchangeability of vowels (*e.g.*, Burrell and Tamlin), to mention but two of the problems that add to the difficulties of those who would probe the mysteries of epithesis, aphæresis and apocope. While, when all is said and done, there will always remain such names as Strokelady, Harepyn, Rotenhering and Trampleasure that will not admit of a simple nick-nominal solution, but will call out all our reserves of detective skill and still defy us.

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Mr. Gathorne-Hardy is the most pretentious of the six. He is, however, one of those poets who are inspired too much by the works of other people; because they enjoy great poetry they suppose themselves capable of writing it. And at another time Mr. Gathorne-Hardy would have produced, at least, good verse; fashion would have obliged him to work harder, and would have imposed on him verse-forms supplying to a certain extent his lack of ear. Writing to-day, he is under no restraint; his workmanship may be as lax and lazy as he cares to leave it, and then pass for subtle; he is even touched with the now not uncommon feeling that the flatter he is the better he is. He complacently produces such lines as the following (from a philosophic poem):

I thought that he was talking nonsense, but

The same carelessness of his audience comes out in other forms. In a note to the poem just mentioned, *Paradisus Dubitantis*, he remarks: "The inner meaning of an allegorical poem is of more importance to the writer than the reader"—therefore, let the reader, on his own responsibility, ferret out of it what sense he can. That is all very well where, as in the *Divine Comedy*, the literal meaning can be trusted to stand on its own feet. Mr. Gathorne-Hardy's poem has almost no interest if not the interest of interpretation, for the style is wooden, the narrative aimless, thin and dull. He acknowledges in the same note "small borrowings" from Dante among other writers; it is impossible not to feel that in Dante's case he understates the obligation—if obligation can be talked of where so little benefit has been derived. The whole scheme of *Paradisus Dubitantis* is obviously prompted by Dante's poem, which seems, in the author's own phrase, both pitiable and laughable. And what is the use of transplanting even the best ideas into a soil where they can only shrivel up? Yet Mr. Gathorne-Hardy's badness is largely his own fault; it does not represent his powers, as this description, for instance, of a dispersing mist will show:

> Moving, the fog turned round within itself,
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Blown violent and cold against our faces. . . .
Flakes of mist followed like a flock of gulls,
And as we entered the valley, fluttered by,
As though disturbed from inaccessible nests.

After all, perhaps no one can read Dante quite in vain.

Shakespeare and Milton are Mr. Edward Thompson's prophets. His new book includes a blank verse drama, two "pageants," and an adaptation from the Elder Edda. *Saul*, the drama, is classical, quiet, dignified and rather static: in the *May Pageant* Mr. Thompson brings together Robin Hood and Oberon and their companies, in a medley of prose and verse admittedly deriving from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The source (to commit a mixed metaphor) of *Ivory Palaces* is evidently *Les Trophées;* indeed, the author himself lets fall a hint of it. A book of sonnets, orthodox in style and frequently classical in subject, where calm reflection is relieved by mild scholastic fun, can hardly hope for much of a welcome in these days, unless a very striking genius is apparent in it—which cannot be said here. Mr. Willoughby Weaving never gets beyond good verse, but then he keeps that up most creditably; his sonnets are careful, unpretentious, even distinguished in their calm way.

Mr. Richard Anderson has barely begun to be a poet; and yet he is a poet, and not merely a young man who writes. His poems, indeed, seldom quite come off; they are always lapsing into the crude and the banal; they make abrupt gestures in the void; they are apt to grow earnest over what the poet *thinks* he feels; they nowhere approach greatness; and they have too much resemblance to Rupert Brooke's. In a young writer none of these drawbacks is of much account. On the other hand, they are almost everywhere limpid, fresh and musical; they show an ear sensitive to the emotional values of rhythm; and they are brimful of that undefined but irresistible quality, poetic feeling. Mr. Anderson is free from the now fashionable snobbery that turns a cold shoulder on romance like a schoolboy cutting an unpopular acquaintance. His book exhales a delicious youthful melancholy, which gives it character and, in spite of its weaknesses, great charm. His love poems are dreamy, rapturous and exalted: his landscapes are beautiful and grave. *The Lost Traveller* loses by quotation; its effect is cumulative; but this will do for a taste:

Stark in the wind a thin tree quivers,
The black twigs huddle close.
And out of place among them shivers
One ravaged rose.

The fallen leaves are swept away,
The lawn left clean and bare.
The low skies promise snow to-day,
And a rose there.

Mr. Guinness's poems, though they cannot be called good, manage somehow to be rather pleasing. He has one or two unsuccessful efforts at satire in the "modern" style; but a more ingenuous mind never assumed the trappings of sophistication. Indeed, this mental freshness is the attraction of the book. There are a few love poems innocently Donneish in design; Mr. Guinness is at his best, however, in less abstracted or exalted moods—better in suburban streets and railway stations. This is a fair example of his most sympathetic vein:

The scarlet bus pants slowly up the hill,
And thick the dark suburban houses stand . . .
The deafening rattle of the bus's gears
Alone disturbs the silence of the hill,
Save where a whistling schoolboy runs a stick
In idle ripples down the wooden fence.

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How can one treat adolescence in literature? When we read modern efforts we are tempted to say the task is impossible—sentiment, realism, plain sense, all fail; that sly cynicism which colours Gide's approach is a betrayal of the truth, and if Booth Tarkington and Mark Twain are far better, it is only by a discreet ignoring or diminishing of certain evident problems. Yet adolescence can be treated artistically, though never perhaps if the whole emphasis of the book is on the adolescents and their problems. For so you get a most unreal atmosphere. The peculiar and difficult thing in the world of the adolescent is that while a boy or girl, in profoundest and most convinced fancy, dreams that his or her life and interests are of supreme, unique importance, all the while unconsciously is felt the great, stable world of parents, of home, or of school. The authors of our first three books write of life at school, and Miss Masterman is the only one who occasionally remembers the deep and constant importance of life at home. Her story of a girls' school is, in its rather brittle, light way, by far the best of the three; Joan Roxton, in her ordinariness, is a good heroine, and Miss Masterman presents life at Redcliffe without the vehemence of attack or the complacency of school patriotism. She can show us silliness in a spirit of tolerance; and if the system seems more horrible to the reader than apparently to her, we are willing to admit that the force of her book is increased by the absence of a formal indictment. Mr. Birch is sentimental and romantic. *Pyramid* is a story of romantic friendship. Tony longs for an attachment that shall rival the love of David and Jonathan. He falls in love with Peter, with Ronn, with Roy; each in turn disappoints him by some vulgarism, some insensitiveness, some casual betrayal of the true romance. Mr. Birch would smile at an accusation of sloppiness, nor would it be quite fair because he has made his Tony a boy who is really capable of idealism and self-sacrifice. The book fails because Mr. Birch cannot withdraw himself from his hero, and the story is fevered by the author's exposition of Tony's emotional plight. The quality of Mr. Daniell's stout little book is very different. It is a splendidly unconscious exposition of the making of the stupidest type of public-school-boy man. When Billy Highton enters school, he has the glimmerings of thought, imagination, sensibility; at the end of five years he leaves as stupid as his father who had been to the same school before. It is hard to see whether Mr. Daniell intended this story for Billy I or Billy II; it can, we think, be safely given to either.

It is a long journey from these tales of polite, protected lives to Mr. Hanley's story of Arthur Fearon. Here is a brutal, pitiful, impossible book; one that demands to be read and makes the reader sick with apprehension and disgust and indignation. Fearon is the clever son of a stupid, bullying father and a stupid, bullied mother. He could get a scholarship but his parents make him leave school. After a terrible ordeal as a boiler-scaler this child of thirteen stows away on a cargo boat bound for Alexandria. After this comes the full horror of the book. Fearon is raped, atrociously bullied, beaten, kicked half-killed; the only kindnesses shown to him are foul kindnesses; the only merciful act done to him is his murder, when he is crazy and infected with syphilis, by the ship's captain. The book has art, but Mr. Hanley is not fair to his own considerable talents. He will not allow himself the time to write except in a hot and fervid rage; in consequence his style is often carelessly conventional, in spite of his excessive bluntness of language. Much of his dialogue, not a little of his narrative, has been omitted by a discreet printer, though it is clear enough that a result such as he desires could have been reached without so much recourse to unprintable words and incidents. One does not doubt the veracity of the book; but it lacks the truth that Dostoievsky would have given it, and a great deal of it is fitter for a tract than a novel. Arthur Fearon himself remains rather cloudy, uncertain beside the hideous forms of beastliness and vice by which he is surrounded—and that, Mr. Hanley might retort, is how he sees the plight of the adolescent.

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DEDUCTIONS FROM DETECTIVES

MASH—a kind of bran mash, a great packing case of bran with here an arm and there an ear—a weapon or a corpse sticking out of it—that, I suppose, is all that survives in the mind from the detective stories we have read. And yet, in a hundred years our thrillers will have become text-books of social history, the most authentic chronicles of how we lived.

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Notice how absolutely right Wimsey is—a Rolls-Royce is vulgar, a Daimler correct but for a detective too slow. There remains the enormous 12-cylinder Daimler capable of 100 miles an hour. And how natural for Il Drummond to be a "Bentley Boy," it suggests at once someone brave but oafish, a "cheery soul." Mercédès, Hispano, Isottas and all cars in racing Brooklands trim are the villain's share in motoring, the long, black, wicked-looking Voisin of Gethryn only indicates that he is in secret service. Colonel Gore has just made enough to get out of the Morris ruck in which flounder all Scotland Yard detectives and those of the brilliant amateurs who occasionally allude to the "old bus." Sir Clinton Driffield is a few rungs higher up the same ladder. Already, you see, a classification seems possible. We may take certain types—Wimsey, the aristocrat, the Duke's brother, the *gratin* of London society but with fashionably democratic leanings. He collects first editions, and though he prefers 1915 to 1911 Burgundy, he is a judge of wine. Otherwise he is impeccable and in any social dilemma, uncertain whether to recognise or let oneself be recognised, one asks "What would Wimsey do?"

The Drummond, in spite of "my cousin Stavely," is not so much an aristocrat as the flower of a fashionable military world of baronets and younger sons. "A sportsman and a gentleman, and the combination of the two is an unbeatable product." Though they are utterly dissimilar and antipathetic they lead a similar kind of life, attended by ex-batman valets in bachelor flats in Mayfair. The Drummond's is in Half Moon Street and Wimsey's overlooks the Green Park, even perhaps they may have met, Wimsey leaving the chemist in Piccadilly on some errand for his mother just as the Bull Dog, with Ted Jerningham (only son of Sir Patrick Jerningham, of Jerningham Hall) and Algy and the rest of the boys enter to cure their last night's hangover with the usual morning draught.

Otherwise they are poles apart, true heirs of Court and Country Party. The Drummond is for beer and whisky, a pipe smoker, a national hero, his head, as Mr. Raymond Mortimer has written, should be engraved on the reverse of our coinage. Phyllis, his wife, is blade straight and steel true. He is not afraid to send her alone to Le Touquet. Wimsey is relatively decadent, only a detective to forget an unhappy love affair and then to fall for a murderess and afterwards chuck her! In Paris Wimsey is at the Meurice, Petersen at the Bristol (it's quieter), while the Drummond, whose French is better than he will admit, stays at the Ritz and dines a few doors down the street, at Maxim's.

Of the others, Gethryn, Driffield, Gore represent three levels in the same "milieu." Gethryn is an urbane soldier, rich, with a lovely wife and a house in Knightsbridge, but essentially a military man, the kind you hear saying how much better printed the English translation of Proust is, at smart luncheon parties. He visits in great country houses. Sir Clinton Driffield is a county bore, a person of position, pompous, humourless, and grim. Colonel Gore is the saddest case of all. His people were very well known in the West Country, he was a famous polo player in a crack regiment—but they lost everything, and he could never consequently tell his adorable "Pickles" how much he cared about her. He went off to Central Africa . . . she married another man and finally teased him, from being estate agent and secretary to a golf club, into setting up as a private detective. But everyone has been very decent, they remember the old days, and he still gets an occasional chukka.

In the next group are all the Scotland Yard detectives, Inspectors French, Frost, Parker, Wilson, Pointer, etc. They are plain people. I like French and Pointer the best, Wilson the least. But enough of them.

Apart from a few freaks like Thorndike, Poirot, and Father Brown, there is one more distinct group—the bright young people. It consists of Government officials, like Egerton, or clever products of the universities who are drifting simultaneously into detection and journalism. There is Ronald Knox's appalling hero and the more typical Roger Sheringham, who sometimes lunches besides Wimsey at Isola Bella, but like the Drummond keeps a cask of 4X Ale. He is the only one who is not taken to its bosom by the Yard. There is something repugnant to me about this new class of detective, they have no reticence, are no longer great gentlemen, nor even well off. They are bumptious exhibitionist Rugby-and-Balliol Broadcasting young men, virile male virgins, inquisitive, middlebrows, opportunists. They wear rough clothes, interesting ties and Bloomsbury black hats. They shovel poor Colonel Gore off the pavement and laugh at Beau Drummond's Three Nuns profile framed in the window of the "Junior Sports Club." They find Wimsey effeminate: "young puppies," murmurs Sir Clinton uneasily, as they make little Oxford jokes on the steps of the London library till Professor Thorndike finds some difficulty in passing through. I prefer even American women like Madam Storey and Lynn Macdonald to these new English sleuths, who are taking murder away from country

houses and millionaire's mansions and planting it in Boulestin's, the Russian Ballet, or the Zoo.

And this brings me to the second great virtue of detective fiction, they are the last repository of our passion for the countryside. I used, in my ancient integrity, to despise both bridge and detective stories; the one, I would say, killed conversation and the other poetry, or the desire to read it. Alas, conversation kills itself and bridge is often the only way to prop it, for then the strain is taken off the talk which becomes easier and more candid for ceasing to be the main attraction. This, too, is what the detective story has done for verse. Living in the south of France I began to pine for the English winter; in vain I turned to Georgian poets and lyric novelists of our unproductive soil. I received only a kind of nausea; the language hackneyed and outworn did not convey the sense; the sense, where conveyed, seemed exaggerated and mawkish. I took to buying all the English books I could and discovered Croft. Suddenly I realised I had found the ideal medium for conveying scenery. Here were books where the stress was taken off the countryside (which then seemed to spring up like trodden grass), and conveyed to the events which happened there; where local colour was useful as well as beautiful; where Grantchester was not an overworked sentimental symbol, but a place whose loveliness was enhanced because it was accidental, like the metaphors of *Paradise Lost*, or the landscapes in *Tales of the Hall*. And so I cured my homesickness, walking with Inspector French round the Mumbles, gazing down winter estuaries, making innumerable railway journeys, exploring Rochester with Thorndike, going with Mr. Fletcher to country towns till I could find my way in any of them to the Doctor's pleasant Georgian house, the rectory, the spinster's cottage, the eccentric lawyer's office. There was the inn parlour where I asked a few apparently harmless questions, and finally the dingy room where the inquest was held.

And the country houses, the great parks dripping in the autumn weather, the brilliant company, the rooms I have slept in, finding my way from the map on the first page. Those awkward scenes when the guests are solemnly assembled and informed of the tragedy—how seldom have I been allowed to stay till Monday morning! I prefer the station hotels, the country inns where curiosity is allowed to triumph over politeness. And the meals! The fare of every detective is as carefully delineated as his suspicions, the chops, the steaks, the birds I have shared with them, the Yquem of Wimsey, Inspector French's claret at the Plymouth hotel, the Drummond's tankards, Gore's whisky, Sir Clinton's port. Stray landscapes emerge from the débris, a charming account of the Island of Porquerolles, Gore on the Mendips, Wimsey up in Galloway, Inspector French at Bordeaux and sailing up a hidden gum-scented forest river in the Landes. Even Sherlock Holmes, whose detection is now hopelessly out of style, intolerably primitive, unfair, and *vieux jeu*, is becoming what I have prophesied for Wimsey, Bull Dog, Sheringham, and *Death of My Aunt*, a period piece, a social document. We read him for Baker Street, for those *fin de siècle* fogs from which emerged the clopping of his clients' hansoms, for the tiaras, the crowns, the incognitos, the landladies, for all the paraphernalia of the nineties in which Holmes himself, the implacable syringe pressed to the bare arm, murmuring, the fiddle beside him, *l'homme c'est rien, l'œuvre c'est tout*, is so much the British figurehead that he deserves at least a drop scene in *Cavalcade*. So in time to come will little booklets appear, and someone yet unborn will investigate where Wimsey loved and deliver the Romanes lecture on "Sapper's women."

Lastly, it can be said for detective novels that they are the most advanced, the nearest approach to pure form of any work produced to-day. While the novel grows more and more sprawling, dragging from incident to incident, volume to volume, weltering in emotions, the typical unplanned exuberant Romantic achievement, so its sister the detective story, grows ever more classical, the characters, the scene, the actions are ever more strictly compelled by the writer's more rigid subordination to the plot. And the plot also, how increasingly severe are the laws which govern it, no longer may the detective keep evidence to himself, may any kind of highly specialised branch of knowledge be exploited for the crime. The alibi, for instance, is more often the central problem of a detective story than the crime itself, for it is a problem that can only be constructed by human ingenuity, without appeal to rare poisons, witch-doctors, etc., and only by human ingenuity can it be solved. The detective story, in fact, is the "trobar clus," the chant royale or double ballade of contemporary literature, as exacting as the sonnet but with none of the sonnet's subject-matter's romantic concession to the Moi Haissable. But inside the formal shell—the accepted stages of the plot—the detective story, unlike any other form of literature, alone assumes an increasing intelligence in the reader from year to year. It is wholly progressive, presupposing ever more acumen in the critics, the only art which writes increasingly up to its readers and not increasingly down to them; to a connoisseur no story before 1910 is readable; and everyone since that year, if you have a palate, can be unhesitatingly dated. At the moment the problem is one of combining an intricate crime, as dry as a Torquemada cross-word puzzle, with the most entertaining psychology possible, the vividest and most malicious presentation of character. Of course, something has to be sacrificed for sophistication, and in this case it is the element of horror. A corpse has to be supplied in ingenious circumstances at a very early stage in the book, the reader is now hardened to all forms of killing, nor will he wait till the middle of the book for the crime, although that provides the author with the chance to shock the reader by first making him really attached to the murdered man. In America, too much is thought of both horror and psychology. Van Dine tries to create suspense by frequent killings, Rufus King almost achieves it and in the "psychological" novels of Kay Strahan and Mary Rinehart, two-thirds of the book is sometimes through before a crime happens. The English in fact are supreme in detective stories and have been since *The Moonstone*. They are our ablest, our most authentic British export. I hope I have shown what harm we do to them by reading them in bulk and refusing to believe that the sediment they leave, the residuum, the interior mush of error and surfeit from all these books we send ourselves to sleep with, is wholly without value. The detective story has been hampered sadly by two misconceptions. People have confused it with the humble thriller, even Bull Dog's inclusion here is in the nature of a courtesy, and someone has said that the reading of detective stories is the recreation of all superior minds. On the contrary, if they were really superior, it would be their only occupation!

CYRIL CONNOLLY.

HATREDS AND MANNERS

LISTENING to authors at those quarrels which resound so janglingly down the ages, even unto this present, I sometimes ask myself, is the mutual hatred of writers more ardent than that of other professions? And I answer myself, no, it is but that they are more articulate, and hasten, when they hate, to put pen to paper and say so. Isaac Disraeli prefaces his invaluable work on the *Quarrels of Authors* with the sage remark, "I have always considered an author a human being who possesses two sorts of lives—the intellectual and the vulgar; in his books we trace the history of his mind, and in his actions those of human nature." But, alas, the author's human nature too often forces its vulgar way into his books, and sadly upsets them. The human nature of authors, being what it is, should be kept out of literature; it belongs properly to the street, the tavern, the boudoir, the coffee house, and the

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police court. In such places, it is worth watching, and I would always join in the crowd which collects to watch it. I would give all the poet Marvell's written satires for the street skirmish in which he sent his foe, Bishop Parker, sprawling in the gutter, and, "looking on him pleasantly," told him to "lie there for the son of a whore," and, when subsequently called to account for these strong words, indicated a passage in a recent book by Dr. Parker in which he declared himself "a true son of his mother, the Church of England," and another which confessed the Church to have "spawned two bastards, the Presbyterians and the Congregationals." "Ergo, my Lord," said Marvell, "he expressly declares that he is the son of a whore." But, of Marvell's written words, it is not his satires and polemics that we love, but his poetry, in which there is no vulgar human nature at all. Indeed, few people can write really good hate; too often the frail craft of the writer's wit is capsized and drowned in the waves of his spleen before ever it reaches the enemy port. Pope was at times brilliant in hate; at other times merely silly, rude and gross. His attack on Hervey is an example in one sort; his more outrageous lines on Lady Mary, in the other. The *Dunciad* is a mixed affair, showing him at his worst and better; never, I think, at his best. But he had, at the least, skill and the technique of attack, whereas many literary haters have had merely spleen for weapon, and spleen, like patriotism, is not enough. Nor is the savage instinct to ridicule the physical appearance and private misfortunes of the enemy, a weapon used regularly by our rude forefathers, who lampooned Davenant for his lost nose, Pope for his hump, Swift for his madness, Lady Mary Montagu for her dirty linen, Steele for his debts, his bastards, and his penurious death, any man or woman for lack of means, looks, domestic happiness, or married parents. Indeed, much of the personal invective among our literary ancestors, from the Greek satirists and the Roman epigrammatists down to the mid-nineteenth century, reads like nothing so much as the addresses of sergeant-majors to their recruits. The nineteenth century (abuse it as we may) did produce better manners, and literary hatreds, doubtless as acute as ever, took on a more elegant and suave expression. Wilde and Whistler fought with rapiers, not with bludgeons; the Victorians and Edwardians, no more amiable than their predecessors, were better bred. Did the European war, shattering so much, shatter also this new good taste? For there seems, since that so desolating catastrophe, to be a recrudescence of barbarous manners among writers. Scarce a week now passes without the publication of some streperous piece of personal rudeness by one writer about another or others. The most recent (unless I have missed some since) is a curious production which seems, vaguely, to be intended to be on the model of the *Dunciad*. It is a boisterous, rowdy, wordy, splenetic, and clumsy affair; really, no one should attempt a *Dunciad* without a little more accomplishment than this heavy-booted poet, whose kicks make up in fury and impartiality what they lack in grace and skill. The voice of the sergeant-major resounds, foul-mouthed and hearty, throughout, damning the lot of them. Mr. Roy Campbell, the author, has the primitive, fingers-to-nose manners of (say) Miss Ethel Mannin, but with much more malice and much less excuse, since he has, elsewhere, written poetry, and even may have read some (one acquits Miss Mannin of this). It is, surely, rather queer.

But, though the articulation of literary hate naturally exceeds that of other professions, I am told that the hate itself is not much greater. All the more credit to those better-mannered professions which so restrain themselves. The worst we ever hear one learned judge to say of another is, "And who is Lord Darling?" The worst that generals do is to write their memoirs, mentioning the faulty tactics of other generals in some recent war; while the feuds of doctors and surgeons are doubtless waged still more quietly, with knife and deadly draught, and no vulgar clamour about it. Monarchs and heads of governments express (in these days) their mutual antipathies in the polite and cautious wrappings of diplomacy, though time was when it was otherwise. The clergy may reason at times pettishly together concerning ceremonies, rubrics, substance, accidents, and the like, but how are they fallen from the primal ferocity of the days when fulminations thundered from cleric to cleric across continent and ocean over the slightest difference in opinion or in spelling, when popes damned abbots, prelates called mar-prelates apes that dance in hell, and predestinarians and free-willers cursed one another for poxy Arminian bastards and damned predestinating rogues! It is said that actors and actresses do not invariably love one another; but then neither can these charming miso-grammatists invariably parse and spell, so that we get little written evidence of their sentiments. This applies also to many politicians, but these keep secretaries, who write letters for them to the newspapers about other politicians, so that a little human nature does escape here. But for the most part it is left, in these finicking days, to professional authors, who become less finicking every day. For myself, I confess that I am finicking, and if one tells me that he does not mince matters, I agree with the lady who replied that she preferred them minced. But I perceive that this preference is becoming (for an author) somewhat peculiar, and that to finick is no longer in the mode.

ROSE MACAULAY.

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However, he would not need to learn a new language to find out he was wrong. For, though English writers may not be religious writers, English literature includes the greatest known collection of religious writing, the Authorised Version of the Bible. And our reader has only to turn the leaves of his prayer book from the section devoted to hymns to the section devoted to Psalms to see how the thing should be done. The Jews in poetry, like the Russians in novels, are not afraid of religion; they do not approach it, as we tend to do, gingerly, with voices lowered and heads bowed, on reverent and clumsy tiptoe. It is as easy for them to speak of God as of Mr. Smith in the next street: and in consequence, when writing of Him, they put all of themselves into their work. The Psalms, like Shakespeare's Sonnets, seem the natural expression of character—not always a very amiable character: harsh, uncontrolled, incoherent. But though this may be distasteful to the sensitive minds of modernist clergymen, it is what makes the Psalms such good poetry. The Psalmist speaks to Heaven naturally, without concealing or apologising for his faults. He does not feel that decency demands he should present himself as a waxen image of virtue. And, in consequence, these outbursts of a semi-civilised Oriental, 2,000 odd years ago, are a far more living expression of religion than the average book of pious verse written, say, in 1850. For they are a genuine expression of the unchanging human heart, fearing, complaining, hoping, savage, inconsistent, abject, sublime.

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> Like as the hart desireth the water brooks, so
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becomes:

> As pants the hart for cooling streams
> When heated in the chase,
> So longs my soul, Oh God, for Thee
> And Thy refreshing grace!

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Bryan Cooper. By LENNOX ROBINSON. Constable. 7s. 6d.
And So Began the Irish Nation. By SEAMUS MACCALL. Longmans. 12s. 6d.

There can be a charm and a beauty in a writer's method of approaching his subject, a tact and a good taste which establish straightaway the whole tone of what is to follow. This charm distinguishes Mr. Lennox Robinson's brief memoir of Bryan Cooper. He is writing of a man whose name outside Ireland, probably, will be unfamiliar to most people, and even in Ireland to a good many, and he writes with the quiet simplicity of friendship, avoiding all exaggeration, so that beneath the restraint of his manner one divines rather than sees the spirit of affection in which the book was conceived. It is a singularly happy method, and through its gracious influence the portrait of Bryan Cooper comes to life. He was, as we get to know him in these pages, not a man of genius, not a great man, but a very intelligent and lovable one, his mind and temper characterised by "sweetness, generosity, and an absence of all bigotry." We see him as a schoolboy, as a young man, as a man of middle-age, and always he possesses these qualities. The glimpse we have of him in his prep-school days is particularly delightful. "On the whole," says Mr. Robinson, "a normal, unhappy English childhood. Schools which are preparatory to Eton, masters' reports which invariably lay stress on the child's excellence in English. But he is a dirty, untidy little boy. According to his school reports he is, every term, 'improving in habits of neatness,' but the improvement goes on for so long that one can only infer that it started from complete chaos. 'Darling Mother, Mr. Dobie has said that if I get cleaner and tidier he will send me home for Good Friday, aren't you glad?'"

Bryan Cooper died on July 5th, 1930, at the age of forty-six. His career had not been spectacular, and he himself said that he had achieved nothing; but he had achieved a great deal, though doubtless not all he had hoped and dreamed. He died too soon for that. Besides, he was not precocious, and, for one of his temperament, the conditions of his life were on the whole unfavourable. He was slow in finding himself, was something of a misfit. He knew it. His position as head of a great landowning family in Sligo did not satisfy him: the quiet life of a country gentleman did not satisfy him. And the secret of this dissatisfaction seems to have been not so much an ambition as an ideal. He knew he had abilities of a kind that could be employed for the good of his country, but the opportunity to employ them was lacking. He felt drawn to the profession of soldiering: he tried it, and, though his failure was due primarily to ill-health, he recognised that he was not really a born soldier, had too many other interests, was too fond of literature, was, above all, too humane. He felt drawn to politics, became an ardent Unionist, and in 1910 entered Parliament as member for South County Dublin. But on the outbreak of the war he rejoined the Army, and after its conclusion returned to Ireland, in 1919, as Press Censor. Here again he carried out his duties with courage, loyalty, and intelligence, though the dissatisfaction remained—the dissatisfaction of a man who feels he is not doing his right work. He wrote the first chapter of a novel; he wrote other things. Finally, in 1923, he became an independent member of the Irish Dail, and the happiest years of his life followed. All was now well. His first marriage had ended tragically, but his second was happy; moreover, he was doing work that was constructive and creative, and there was plenty of it.

The bare outline of its story, however, cannot do justice to Mr. Robinson's book. One of its great charms lies in the setting of the scene, in the pictures of Markree Castle, and of Sligo and its people in the past and in the present.

> There seems to be hardly a barony in County Sligo that is not linked with faery legend or religion or ancient battle.' Years and years later . . . certain places in Sligo were to be intertwined into Irish poetry, and a little island in the most beautiful lake of Ireland—Lough Gill—was to take its indisputable place in poetry. *The Lake Island of Innisfree* has been, perhaps, too often quoted, but all County Sligo, the "reed of Coolaney," Ballygawly Hills, Knocknaree, the Rosses—have passed into poetry; have had the magic touch laid on them and exist for us as Troy exists.

They were troubled times in which Bryan Cooper lived, and there were many troubles in the Ireland of Mr. MacCall's *And so Began the Irish Nation*. But these are remote: in fact, the first was caused by the Ice Age. Mr. MacCall's is not a volume one wants to read straight through; it is really a kind of manual of Irish antiquities. The arrangement of the book is chronological, but necessarily it is scrappy, containing a vast amount of information and "forgotten lore." Also there are plenty of pictures and an excellent index. Mr. MacCall is learned and enthusiastic, perhaps a little too enthusiastic to be a quite impartial historian. "In spite of its faults, in spite of its mutilations at the hands of its ancient and modern transcribers, Irish mythology remains 'as splendid in conception and as brilliant in colour as the Greek.'" It may be so, but I confess I have found nothing in this book to persuade me that it is so. Greek religion and Greek philosophy are inseparable from Greek art and Greek literature, and these I still believe to be the noblest creations the human mind and spirit have achieved.

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All About Women. By GERALD GOULD. Methuen. 5s.

Dwellers in Arcady. By R. L. GALES. Sheldon Press. 5s.

Musings and Memories. By CHARLES E. RAVEN, D.D. Hopkinson. 7s. 6d.

Something in the City. By COLLIN BROOKS. Country Life. 8s. 6d.

Memories of the Months: First Series. By Sir HERBERT MAXWELL. Maclehose. 6s.

Tiny, My Terrier. By FRANCES PITT. Arrowsmith. 3s. 6d.

Ideally, the essayist, like the poet, should be free "to stand and stare," and to write only as often and at such length as he pleases. The perfect essay demands independence and spontaneity; and it would be idle to pretend that we always find these qualities in the modern practitioners of the art. The present-day essayist is compelled to supply a stated number of words for a regular "market," and work thus produced inevitably displays occasional laboriousness, especially when read in bulk. Since, however, we live in an imperfect world, in which theoretically ideal conditions possess actual disadvantages, there are compensations. If spontaneity be the life-blood of the true essay, form is, after all, no less essential; and form implies a discipline which the completely free writer is apt to shirk. Discipline has made Messrs. Lynd, Lucas, and Gould masters of their own individual styles; and, for each of these authors, standardisation of form, while damming the full flood of spontaneity, provides, within its limits, a channel through which inspiration, when kindled, may readily flow. And, to change the metaphor, discipline sometimes fosters its own inspiration. An essay that begins as an exercise may too often remain a mere exercise; but now and then the tinder of routine produces genuine ignition when "the spark from heaven" might have been awaited in vain.

While it is useless to blink the fact that modern journalistic necessity imposes heavy fetters upon them, we can but marvel again at the ease with which our periodical essayists carry their chains, and sometimes turn the very chains to advantage, in the gay spirit, for example, of Mr. Gould, who, embarking upon an amusing anecdote towards the end of his allotted space, breaks off with one of his happy misquotations: "But that is another essay." The characteristic virtues of Messrs. Lynd, Lucas and Gould are too familiar to need formal notice. Mr. Lynd in particular needs no bush in this journal. Why, why, save to record the happy event of a new volume, should we review "Y. Y."? If several of his latest essays, including the title-piece, are relatively strained and "padded," others (notably *The Butt-Gatherer*) are among the best that Mr. Lynd has written; and we specially welcome his perfect tribute to St. John Adcock.

Visibility Good is a collection of Mr. Lucas's miscellaneous essays. It reveals him again as the wanderer, roaming the world with insatiable curiosity, mingling information with impressionism, maintaining an alert eye for oddities, and mixing a little malice with essential tolerance. In his lighter vein, *Wire and Barbed Wire* is exquisite fooling with a real "bite." But Mr. Lucas is not always so happy, either in this book or in *The Barber's Clock*. This latter volume, a sustained "conversation piece" in which Jenny Candover and Richard, the narrator, exchange memories of their earlier years, has many of the usual felicities. Yet a note of explicit discontent with life—a certain barrenness of philosophy when confronting "the menace of the years"—begins slightly to obtrude itself in Mr. Lucas's work. It is often said that Mr. Lucas is our most vital essayist because he draws directly from life. But, though he has hitherto skimmed it so deftly, we have sometimes suspected that his ice was rather thin—that, in other words, he lived by fancy rather than by imagination, and that his roving habit has been as much an escape from, as a seeking after, reality. His latest books confirm this impression.

To abide in one centre is to be at *the* centre of life, in vivid contact with its characteristic changes. To wander incessantly is to see a succession of pictures which, though transient in themselves, deceive the mind with the illusion of permanence. That is why Mr. Chesterton has said that "travel narrows the mind"—a conviction which Mr. Gould elaborates ironically. Mr. Gould is an incorrigible "stay-at-home," who, perforce, views the world through the printed page, and is at his best when caricaturing the absurdities of modern fiction and journalism. His vitality, however, is unquestionable. Like Mr. Lynd, he keeps secretly a strong hold upon the deeper realities and does not baulk them. Being true essayists, of course, Mr. Lynd and Mr. Gould never explicitly point to the depths. But they illustrate the fact that the most satisfying gaiety only proceeds from minds that have faced ultimate issues and come to terms with them.

The late R. L. Gales, some of the best of whose essays are now reprinted, lost himself imaginatively in the rural and religious partition of mediæval England, and was steeped in its legends and folk-lore. If he idealised the past, at any rate he made his Arcady a real country of the mind. He was no mere "escaper." Nor is Canon Raven, who, from a different religious angle and in a definitely moralising vein, arraigns many features of our industrial age. In addition to some more of his fine bird studies Canon Raven includes a number of papers on his memories of the war and on the mystery of pain and evil. These chapters make a fascinating human document, but their frankness, commendable for the writer's own purpose, is too stark for the "essay" as creative art.

Something in the City contains a wealth of information about the financial and commodity markets of modern London, with glimpses at their history. Mr. Brooks's facts are authoritative and remarkably interesting. We wish, however, that he had allowed them to speak more freely for themselves. He has a genuine flair for vivid description; but, overworking it in pseudo-"essay" style, he becomes facetious and irritating.

Sir Herbert Maxwell's volume is a revised reprint of a work originally published in 1897. With some good anecdotes intersprinkled, it supplies notes and observations on field life during a year, set down in plain, workmanlike prose. Miss Frances Pitt, in her sympathetic and whimsical account of a puppy and its friends, displays once more the vitalising touch that lifts "nature study" into literature.

GILBERT THOMAS.

DAYLIGHT ON DOSTOEVSKY

Dostoevsky. A New Biography. By EDWARD HALLETT CARR. With a Preface by D. S. Mirsky. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

When Dostoevsky's widow, Anna Grigorievna, died recently, much biographical material which she had jealously guarded was brought to light. The Soviet Government have since published it, and Mr. Carr has thus been able to utilise it in his biographical study of the great novelist. Most of the material relates to Dostoevsky's early life, those turbulent chapters which Anna Grigorievna tried for thirty years so valiantly to live down. As a practical woman, possessive wife, tender nurse, acute publisher, secretary and literary agent for her husband, she was fully justified in doing so, for the early years of the poet were neither happy nor creditable. His childhood had been lop-sided and lonely, culminating in the murder of his father by peasants. The boy had been thrown out, raw and susceptible, to the world, possessing no discipline except that of terror, no worldly sense of money or the necessity for steady work. The first touch of literary success, following the publication of his *Poor Folk*, went to his head, and his vain antics made him the laughing-stock of the Russian literary world, earning him a reputation as "the literary pimple," which remained, amongst those antagonistic to him, through the rest of his life.

Following that unfortunate beginning came his association with the Radicals. Even this did him no good, for it appears on Mr. Carr's showing to have been a chance matter, the young man butting in blindly without either conviction or serious thought on the realities of the Russian political situation. In a kind of self-hypnotised excitement, productive of a little rhetoric and no action, he got himself embroiled with the police. There followed the notorious trial and condemnation, the scene on the morning of execution, the last-moment reprieve—a sort of diabolical joke by the local police authorities—the exile and army service lasting ten years.

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Mr. Carr has done a lot in ferreting out the facts about this period in the poet's life. The story he tells of the disgusting, inhuman conditions in which Dostoevsky existed would extenuate the most depraved conduct following such experiences. For four years this sensitive, brooding genius knew not one moment of solitude. He was stived up with murderers, criminals, degenerates, nervous cranks, and fellow political victims in one low, badly lighted hut. Here is his own picture of the scene.

> Imagine to yourself an old, tumble-down wooden building which it has long ago been decided to scrap, and which is no longer fit for use. In summer intolerably stuffy, in winter unbearably cold. All the floors rotten. An inch of filth on the floor on which you slip and fall. The little windows frosted up so that the whole day long it is impossible to read. On the panes ice an inch thick. Drips from the ceiling—draughts everywhere. We packed like herrings in a barrel. The stove is fed with six logs; no heat (the ice scarcely melts in the room) and awful fumes—and so it goes on all the winter. Here in the barrack the convicts wash their clothes, and the whole of the little barrack is splashed with water. No room to turn round. From dusk to dawn it is impossible to go out to satisfy one's needs, the barracks being locked, a large tub is placed in the corridor and the stench is insufferable. All the convicts stink like swine and say that it is impossible not to behave like swine "since we are living beings."

If one wants more details of the horrors undergone by those dehumanised wretches, into whose souls as well as flesh the iron fetters had entered, one can read Dostoevsky's *Memoirs from the House of the Dead*. It is instructive; but, as Mr Carr says, "the business of posterity is, after all, not so much with what Dostoevsky underwent during those years of imprisonment as with the view of his sufferings which ultimately expressed itself in his art." The chief value of Mr. Carr's work is that he has presented this view with such fairness, tender intuition, and subtlety of understanding that the subject of his work stands up as a man so distinct and humanly recognisable that all the former emanations as prophet, magician, saint or devil, conjured up by other zealots, vanish from our minds. For the first time Dostoevsky is shown life-size, and in such a sane light that the man, his work, and his complicated career fit together into a unity as understandable as it can possibly be to an onlooker. He is no longer the Slavophil prophet. But neither is he the being pictured by D. H. Lawrence.

> Dostoevsky, the Judas,
> with his sham Christianity
> epileptically ruined
> the last bit of sanity
> left in the hefty bodies
> of the Russian nobility.

Mr. Carr has thrown further light also on Dostoevsky's first marriage during his Siberian exile and enforced army service, and on his famous liaison with Paulina Suslova, the beautiful coquette who afterwards became the wife of the eccentric philosopher Rosanov, a queer being, a splenetic Nietsche-kin whom certain Dostoevsky fans of the mystico-vodka school have tried vainly to habilitate in this country. Suslova kept a diary which is now accessible. It contains much unconscious self-revelation, and supplies conclusive evidence that Dostoevsky was no blasé man-of-the-world amusing himself by seducing innocent young girls. Mr. Carr examines the affair with his usual calm detachment, and concludes that "no reader of the diary can regard Dostoevsky as a cool and calculating rake, or can doubt that Suslova was by nature salacious and by nature a coquette—for she continually depicts herself whetting the appetite of the male even when she had no intention of satisfying it." Those people who know the work of Maurice Baring, that latterday prose Catullus, will recognise the type. It is inevitably hated by its antithesis, the self-sacrificing wife, the maternally passionate so perfectly represented by Anna Grigorievna.

By some singular quality of personality, however, Mr. Carr is able to expose such people as Suslova without detracting from their charm and whatever merits they may possess. It is this charitableness which makes his book so comprehensive and living. Without it he could not possibly have penetrated so deeply into the character and mind of Dostoevsky, of Anna Grigorievna, of Turgeniev (though here he is perhaps a little too unsympathetic), and the host of minor characters who come and go on the stage of Russian life during the nineteenth century. In addition to this fine historical presentation, Mr. Carr has also analysed the novels and collated them with the poet's life, proving himself to be as sane a literary critic as he is an historian. That combination makes him an excellent biographer.

RICHARD CHURCH.

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FRANCIS MEYNELL VERA MEYNELL DAVID GARNETT

to Miss Amy Cruse's *The Golden Road to English Literature*. In view of her subject, the defect is here more serious, but though her obviously real appreciation of English literature has not affected the author's style, the book has a good deal to recommend it, though it is perhaps for the school library rather than for the Christmas tree.

The same can be said of Mr. Knapp-Fisher's *Outline of World History for Boys and Girls*, though his style is superior to that of Miss Cruse, and his difficulties come from the vastness of his subject.

To some extent he puts wars in their place, and gives perhaps as much space as he can to what seem to the writer the two most interesting aspects of history, "the condition of the people" question and the state of learning and science and the degree of esteem in which they have at various times been held.

So far English writers for younger children have for several years been excelled in this field of imparting information by Americans. For example, English publishers and writers for children might well take a look at a book recently issued by Macmillan's—*North America*, by Lucy Sprague Mitchell. It is a geography intended for children of eight, nine and ten, and is planned in a way which appears to be entirely original and is certainly exceedingly ingenious.

For example, there are two stories, one of a heifer who escapes from a branding pen in Texas and another of a small fish swept by the tide down the Ambrose Channel and up again. In each of them, to quote the well concealed "note for grown ups" "the dramatic control is the geographical environment. In the life of White-Face the kind of grass she finds, in Speckle Fin's adventure, the tide."

The author's fault is that she is often too anthropomorphic, but she has an almost alarming knowledge of three things—of the modern world, of how children's minds work, and of wide facts of geographic determination. Add to that that she knows how to tell a story. The book is, in fact, remarkably good.

Waterless Mountain has, in a more specialised way, some of the same qualities. It is a story of a present day Indian boy in Arizona. A child to whom the present review copy was submitted praised the fact that modern primitive conditions were described. This child, for example, was delighted by the account of the nomadic hero who dresses as a brave and believes in water spirits, and who yet at one point goes into a shop and buys tinned peaches. A scene in a cinema is also a turning point in the drama. This book is another typical product of America's new attention to the writing of children's books. Incidentally it is well, if a trifle over-poetically, written.

But when it comes to real imaginative writing, where nothing at all (on the conscious level at least) is to be learnt, we can match the Americans and the Germans. Of four best imaginative children's books of this season, America's *Twilight of Magic*, by Hugh Lofting, and Germany's *Emil and the Detectives*, by E. Kästner, delightful and much to be recommended as they both are, are unquestionably surpassed by the superb uprush of the unconscious, round which Richard Hughes has erected his derrick, and which he has now refined into the twenty stories of *The Spider's Palace*. This is the best book of fairy tales to be written for many years. The fourth book, which is specially recommended to waterside children, is Arthur Ransome's *Swallowdale*.

In *Welcome Christmas* Miss Eleanor Graham has contrived a very attractive miscellany for youngish children rather on the lines of *The Week-End Book*. It will make a centre of radiation for a great deal of pleasure this Christmas. It is an admirable present for a family of children.

Of the old type of miscellany, the annuals, there are this year the usual alarming array, bright as the vases round which you throw rings at a fair, gaudy as the pictures on the cheap chocolate boxes you may win in the next side show by throwing balls into a bucket. Inside, the stuff is all stale. The leaves of these books are as thick as blotting paper, they are full of pictures from the files round which new stories have been written by hack writers toiling to be bright and attractive on pain of dismissal. These blown-out monsters, these dropsical books, are for the most part a dismal show. One or two of them are a little above the lowest level, for instance the *Empire Annual for Boys* and the *Empire Annual for Girls*, but the 7s. 6d. they cost would be better spent on any of several more modest volumes before mentioned.

In the case of several of them, or of a rather pleasant if un distinguished adventure story called *The Cruise of the Air*

PETER DAVIES

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Yacht, Silver Cloud, the difference in price would leave half a crown over. This sum might well be spent on a book not primarily intended for children at all, but which was found to convulse two children of nine and thirteen. It is a collection of misprints and is called *Breaks*. Note that it is only for the broadminded.

Bar *The Spider's Palace*, the most attractive book for the child under nine has been produced in Germany. It is called *Das Zauberboot*. It is a book with many admirable virtues.

For example. On one page is a picture of the outside of a house, through the windows of which the family can be observed having breakfast, the maid shaking out a rug and so forth. At the bottom is a tab on which is printed the word "Morgen." Pull the tab, and the word "Vormittag" appears.

Look again at the windows and there are the children having lessons, the cook is getting the dinner ready, papa is in his study, mamma is making jam—and so on—you may pull the household through all the hours of the day! Another delight is a practicable puppet show of a very simple character with a Turk, a Crocodile, a Devil and so on.

Two exceedingly critical little boys of ten were spellbound during a performance. Disappearing pictures and several other delights complete a most enchanting book, which can probably be obtained from the readers own bookseller and certainly through Messrs. Bumpus.

Incidentally, the designing parent will find it an ideal present for a child who does not yet know much German.

Amabel Williams-Ellis.

OLD FRIENDS AND NEW ONES

Tooky. By Berta and Elmer Hader. Longmans. 5s. 6d.

Sumsense, But Not Much. By E. M. Jameson. Oxford University Press. 5s.

Peacock Eggs. By Margaret and Mary Baker. Blackwell. 3s. 6d.

All Mary. By Gwynedd Rae. Mathews and Marrot. 5s.

The Wonder World Fairy Tale Book. By Gwen Bourne. Palmer. 5s.

Tell Me A Story. By Doris Palmer. Palmer. 5s.

Into the Picture Screen. By Vera Wheatley. Murray. 6s.

The Twilight of Magic. By Hugh Lofting. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Santa Claus in Summer. By Compton Mackenzie. Blackwell. 4s. 6d.

No. 9 Joy Street. Ed. Michael Lynn. Blackwell. 6s.

I Know A Secret. By Christopher Morley. Faber and Faber. 7s. 6d.

Black Beauty. By Anna Sewell. Bell. 3s. 6d.

The Cuckoo Clock. By Mrs. Molesworth. Macmillan. 6s.

Swallows and Amazons. By Arthur Ransome. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Poems for A Child. By John Drinkwater. Collins. 5s.

A Child's Garden of Verses. By R. L. Stevenson. Harrap. 5s.

The Night Before Christmas. By Clement C. Moore. Harrap. 5s.

Rhymes of Flood and Field. By Patrick R. Chalmers. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 15s.

Ladies and Gentlemen. By J. C. Breckinridge. Hatchard. 7s. 6d.

In my childhood and my school-days mathematics of all kinds were anathema to me, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that I could bring myself to look upon them as necessary evils. Perhaps it is for this reason that I cannot control a slight shiver when people talk of "the average child." Somehow or other the term smacks of the mathematical, and I invariably visualise the wretched infant as a diagram.

Speaking of diagrams reminds me of a good book for the individual child, and surely it is at Christmas of all times that we forget the average and think only of the individual? *Sumsense, But Not Much* (E. M. Jameson), is a collection of limericks written for special children by an invalid mother who could no longer take part in their games. The illustrations on squared paper are of animals and children, all in diagram form, and I know of at least three five-to-ten-year-old artists who would enjoy the limericks and love to copy the pictures. Their smaller relatives will find as much pleasure in Berta and Elmer Hader's *Tooky*, for who could resist the adventures of a baby-seal who joined a circus? By the way, as a child, I always divided books into look-at-able, game-able, act-able, and make-up-more-about-able. This book fills an admirable place in each category. So does *All Mary*, but I am not sure that anyone but Gwynedd Rae could make up more about the delightful little bear whom we met before in *Mostly Mary*. All three books are for little children and are specially written for individuals, which, I am sure, is responsible for their aliveness. They are good, but do not reach the high standard of Margaret and Mary Baker in *Peacock Eggs*. This book is a sheer delight, and I hope the authors will always remember that even though books are too big to stuff into stockings, some people hang up pillow-cases, and there is plenty of room at the foot of the bed, on the breakfast plate, or under the Christmas tree, for the Oliver Twists of the nursery look forward to many another Christmas. One can hardly glance at the pictures, one wants so much to get on with the text; and one can hardly read the text, one wants so much to see the next picture. Perhaps not game-able or act-able but certainly look-at-able, and, if I am any judge of an author's pleasure in her work, very make-up-more-about-able.

Fairy Tales and Magic are the next on the list, and this season has brought a good store of such books. Santa Claus and Mr. Compton Mackenzie are obviously on intimate terms, and one cannot help thinking that they have had a fireside chat on such mysteries as the flight-from-the-pound and the gold-standard with the resultant need-for-economy, for certainly *Santa Claus in Summer* is a remarkable four-and-sixpenny-worth. Few of us have ever hoped that for such a price we could gain admittance to such a world. Here we meet all the nursery folk which people the Land of Make Believe. Did you know that Red Riding Hood was named after her hair? Mr. Compton Mackenzie says so and I am sure he is right, for he calls Jack Horner a sanctimonious little prig, a thing which I have always felt and never had the courage to utter. He tells, too, why the four-and-twenty blackbirds were baked in a pie, who the old man that wouldn't say his prayers really was, and how Banbury Cross became Banbury Gay after Red Riding Hood had taught the children how to be naughty, because "it's every bit as easy and almost more unpleasant to be horridly good than to be horridly bad." The pictures are a pleasing combination of the imaginative and the straightforward, and the make-up is excellent. It is an ideal gift book for those who like to meet old friends in new dresses. To many of the latter Mrs. Wheatley introduces us in her *Into the Picture Screen*, when Bodge, the solemn little picture-dog, comes out and guides Garth to the land where he meets all the other folk of the screen, and is taught

> When life seems dull and sad
> You mustn't sulk my lad,
> For Magic may be lurking anywhere,
> And suddenly you'll hear
> Fairy whispers in your ear . . .
> And the time of Enchantment will be there.

Did Mr. Lofting have a Bodge to teach him this before he wrote *The Twilight of Magic*? His book has a rather different appeal. It is far more imaginative and is full of the glamour of knights and castles, and the charm of the Middle Ages when men, women, and children really believed in magic. It is full of adventure too, with every now and then a phrase for the thoughtful. "What's more magic than the way a flower grows out of a seed, I'd like to know?" "Magic could never die while the sun had the power to rise again and man had the wish to seek."

No. 9 Joy Street brings the usual medley of prose and verse to suit all tastes. Gwen Bourne's *Wonder World Fairy Tale Book* and Doris Palmer's *Tell Me a Story* keep us in the Land of Make Believe. Miss Palmer's drawing is better than her writing, but one cannot help liking her stories. There is something old-fashioned yet slightly unusual about them, which gives them an atmosphere of their own.

For those who still think old friends are best there is *Black Beauty* in a portable edition, the *Cuckoo Clock*, well printed, and illustrated by C. E. Brock, in the Children's Library, a delightful new edition of Stevenson's *Child's Garden of Verses*, and an omnibus book of *Poems for a Child*, which combine Drinkwater's *All About Me* and *More About Me*—proved successes in many nurseries and schoolrooms. *The Night Before Christmas* is also with us again, but this time illustrated by Rackham. It is

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NISBET — LONDON

small and light and would make a pleasant surprise if slipped under a pillow on Christmas Eve.

I was going to say "So much for old friends," which would have been most ungracious, for I had forgotten Arthur Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons*, not a very old friend it is true, but one of a year's standing whose acquaintance every one must be pleased to make again, especially now that it is illustrated by Clifford Webb. The author really does know how to write for children: in other words, he writes of what he himself delights in and so pleases without any effort both young and old. His book has a worthy sequel in *Swallowdale*, which is redolent of open air, camping, sailing, sunshine, rain, and all the picnic of a good holiday

Rhymes of Flood and Field is also an open-air book, but I don't think Mr. Patrick Chalmers really intended it for children. It strayed into my collection and I cannot resist including it in this article, as it contains so much about horses and hunting that older children with ponies will enjoy it.

Ladies and Gentlemen has no place here. It is another waif which came accidentally with my children's books. The drawings are interesting and it is possible that some grown-ups may like the verse, but I will say no more, for, to quote Mr. Morley's *I Know a Secret* (which is, incidentally, the best of the whole batch) I am now "in one of those drowsing moods which are so helpful in the lives of middle-aged cats."

RHODA POWER.

THE PLEASURES OF PROSE

The London Book of English Prose. Selected and ordered by HERBERT READ and BONAMY DOBRÉE. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 7s. 6d.

In every dozen readers of a book, how many pay attention to the style? Two or three, perhaps, at the very most are fully conscious of its influence upon their judgment; while readers quite insensitive to its effects are as rare probably as those who have learned to analyse them.

For good prose, like all other human commodities, is obedient to the great law of supply and demand. Since it is possible to "get away with" slipshod prose, very often to resounding financial profit, need we be surprised that few prose-authors write well? The conditions which favour good prose are decidedly not present in modern life. A prose-style postulates the leisure to enjoy it and demands a public with some training in appreciation. No doubt, too, the rapid decay of oratory has contributed to the insensitiveness of the reading public. Rhetorical prose is generally bad, but has the advantage of training the *ear* as well as the eye. Much poor prose is written on the understanding that it is in little danger of ever being read aloud. The trained reader not only sees it but also *listens* to it; hence a criterion which would be disastrous to the average novel.

I should like to hazard a preliminary definition that bad prose is prose intended for the eye, but which on no account must be tested by the ear. There are other tests, but that is the most important. Bad prose may have an intellectual meaning, yet rhythmically it is nonsense or less than nonsense. For it is rhythm and rhythm alone, in the last resort, which lies at the bottom of every form of literary expression. Continuous rhythm is the essence of prose-style, and rhythm deliberately broken the essence of verse. The unit employed in poetry is the line, the prose-unit the paragraph or even the chapter. The poet stakes his chances on hit-or-miss; whereas the prose-writer pursues his quarry with deliberation.

Thus the pleasures of good prose, though less ecstatic, are more stable than the pleasures produced by poetry. What divides them is not so much a choice of mood as the different methods by which they achieve the same effect. The difference is rhythmical, not psychological. A good poet may write admirable prose; while most prose-writers have at some time benefited from attempting verse. In both mediums, the *subject* which is being handled becomes significant, just in so far as it is assimilated. Prose may give information and yet be bad. But mental clearness usually makes for verbal elegance.

Usually but, alas, not invariably! There is a sort of music about a clear and logical statement which "literary" divagations often lack. Good sense is often conducive to good writing; but it does not follow that every plain unvarnished statement—such as *Do not throw bottles on to the line*—which tells us without hedging what it means to tell us, deserves inclusion in an antho-

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logy of English prose. It is here that many purchasers of the present volume may be puzzled by Mr. Dobrée and Mr. Read. Good prose, they say, is prose which suits its purpose, and the various purposes which a prose-writer may have in mind they classify as *Narrative*, *Emotive* and *Scientific*, which they again divide up into subsections.

It seems to me that in "emotive"—horrid word!—a first stumbling-block confronts the student of their anthology. Can "emotive" and "narrative" prose be torn apart? Is there not implicit in all story-telling the desire to produce an emotional effect? Indeed, is there any story worth relation which does not exploit its own emotional atmosphere? The story told by a fisherman about his catch is as charged with deep emotion as a stage-soliloquy; while even the narrative of how I failed to board an omnibus does its little best to pluck delicately at the hearer's heart-strings. And yet Gulliver among the Yahoos, in the present selection, and Crusoe's discovery of a footprint on the beach are tabulated as instances of pure narrative, along with Herman Melville's vision of the White Whale. That last passage is so obviously "emotive" as to almost leap from the surroundings in which it finds itself:

> Like noiseless nautilus shells, their light prows sped through the sea; but only slowly they neared the foe. As they neared him, the ocean grew still more smooth; seemed drawing a carpet over its waves; seemed a noon-meadow, so serenely it spread. At length the breathless hunter came so near his seemingly unsuspecting prey that his entire dazzling hump was distinctly visible, sliding along the sea as if an isolated thing, and continually set in a revolving ring of finest, fleecy, greenish foam. He saw the vast, involved wrinkles of the slightly projecting head beyond. Before it, far out on the soft Turkish-rugged waters, went the glistening white shadow from his broad, milky forehead, a musical rippling playfully accompanying the shade; and behind, the blue waters interchangeably flowed over into the moving valley of his steady wake; and on either hand bright bubbles arose and danced by his side.

I imagine that every reader of this anthology will spend some time in rearranging the exhibits, with a result which is never quite identical. To every reader every passage that has been included may have a value which is apparent to him alone. It is possible that, under the heading *Scientific*, he may stumble across gems of "emotive" prose; while an extract from the *Admiralty Sailing Regulations* may stir him as profoundly as Conrad at his best:

> It will frequently be found convenient for a sailing vessel to keep tolerably close to the coast of Borneo, especially when working to windward against the north-east monsoon. . . . Between Masein Tiga islets and Tanjong Bangkai, a vessel may stand towards the coast, guided by the lead, into 7 or 6 fathoms. . . .

A later extract, also tabulated as *Pure Science*, creates an impression which is scarcely less vivid:

> Shrimps are much quicker at finding food than prawns. They hunt with their faces down on the ground like hounds questing, while the prawn hunts with his head held up as usual. If a piece of worm be just buried in sand, a shrimp will dig it out at once, whether blind or not. I have also seen a prawn, after much hesitation, plunge its two arms resolutely into an anemone (*Anthea*) and pull out a worm which the anemone had closed over.

The above citations will surely have made clear some of the dangers which lie in wait for a rash anthologist. Literature must be all things to all men: and one reader, at least, of the second passage, though agreeably soothed by the calm exactitude of the style, caught his breath at the revelation of other qualities which are seldom found in the manuals of pure science. I cannot believe that an author who describes shrimps as *questing* with their faces to the ground was even deficient in the subtlest forms of literary artifice, or is unconcerned to bring our emotions into play. The emotional implications of the whole passage would be blatant if their effect was less felicitous; pathos, comedy, the drama of blind greed, all co-operate to build up an entrancing picture of life as it is understood by small crustaceans in the wavering greenish dusk of a shallow sea.

How Browne would have delighted in those shrimps! And why is it that Browne is better than Bateson? Browne, too, was a "scientific" writer, but a writer who continually outstripped his subject. In short, his great merit as a prose-writer was a complete inability to stick to the point. He started a sober treatise on burial-customs and something extraordinary happened to his style. That style certainly does not suit his argument, or rather he had no argument—or half a hundred. The immense darkling wilderness of his mind set off brilliantly a succession of Golden Boughs. Here and there he came abreast of the sacred tree, stepped up and wrenched off the glittering twig, which he waved abroad with a gesture of fine irrelevance:

> But man is a noble animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave, solemnising nativities and deaths with equal lustre, nor omitting ceremonies of bravery, in the infamy of his nature. . . . Life is a pure flame, and we live by an invisible sun within us.

Lest those heady periods corrupt our judgment, let us turn back to the anthology in hand. For it would be ungenerous not to admit, without more ado, that the difficulties and objections, which I have already outlined, have been anticipated by Mr. Dobrée and Mr. Read. Their method has been to lay down a rough rule that good writing is the product of unmixed motives and that a clear mind is the parent of a good style. There are exceptions, and the exceptions are imposing—Donne, Sir Thomas Browne, and many like them—but, because oysters produce pearls on a diet of sand, whelks and mussels should not be encouraged to try their luck. We most of us write best when we write simply, and are secretly convinced that the opposite is true. Nobody who works his way through this collection but will emerge with a keen sense of his own misdeeds and a feeling of gratitude to the editors who have undertaken it. As an anthology it should stimulate and annoy; as a guide-book it deserves the support of a large public. And in anthologising, as in all branches of human activity, it is better to be intelligent than impeccable.

PETER QUENNELL.

A GEORGIAN MISCELLANY

New English Poems: A Miscellany of Contemporary Verse. Collected by LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE. Gollancz. 6s.

The reviewer who must describe the new poems of forty-six poets after an acquaintanceship of a week or so is in a situation in some respects resembling that of a stranger swept past the Abbey in a car soon after Armistice Day, or through the Park in June. In the traffic, in the rush, the flower-bed confuses. *Are* those flowers? Are they paper? Poppies? Or fakes?

Fakes, some of them, perhaps, these variegated blooms displayed to us with laudable carefulness by Mr. Abercrombie; but fakes—most of the some—in the sense that the Flanders poppies are fakes. The crinkled paper, the red dye, the wire stalks are not negligible symbols. They have their place in the world: perhaps in Westminster, perhaps in a six-shilling miscellany. They may have been planted with true emotion, and the emotion with which they have been planted may convey itself to others, not because the symbols are adequate, but because others too have felt the same emotion.

But a Flanders poppy, red or read, lacks root; it lacks seed. A good poem has both. And surely—even in the rush past—we cannot have been mistaken as to the fact that some of the poems in this miscellany are good poems. There is Mr. Gordon Bottomley's noble and exciting drama of the two mountain peaks, the eagle, and the mother. There is Mr. Aaronson's poem describing a moment of mental bliss, and there is his *Baptism*. And there are Mr. Herbert Palmer's *Counsels of Courage*, Mr. Gibson's *Shifted Chair*, and Mr. Monro's *Blurred Etching*. It seems probable that Mr. Herbert Read's poems will always mean less to audience than to writer, however adequate the audience; but if this judgment is due to an imaginative lack in the critic, his contributions will rank with Mr. Bottomley's and Mr. Aaronson's, and not with such successes as Mr. W. H. Davies's, Mrs. Manning-Sanders's, and Mrs. Shove's. The successes here are obvious. The writers have done what they were trying to do, and they have done it admirably, but they have not achieved work of the first rank.

There are a few rollicking verses among the serious poems, notably Mr. Robert Nichols's catch, on the Prophet "Abe's" pet flea, which makes a strange bedfellow with, for instance, such dignified and noble figures as those of Mr. Laurence Binyon's Solomon and Balkis. There are characteristic poems by Mr. Sturge Moore, Mrs. Cornford, and Mr. Frank Kendon, none of which will be likely to disappoint discriminating admirers. Other long-established poets who are well represented are Mr. Clifford Bax and Mrs. Lynd. It would have been pleasant to have found in the miscellany some young poet, some discovery of Mr. Abercrombie's, whose work was either wholly unknown or known only from a stray poem or two published in a journal—such, for instance, as those of Miss Marie de L. Welch—but all

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the forty-six authors represented here have published at least one volume, and most have published several.

It is to be supposed that Mr. Yeats, Mr. A. E. Housman, Mr. Masefield, Mr. T. S. Eliot, Miss Sitwell, Mr. Sassoon, Mr. Robert Graves, Mr. Roy Campbell, and Mr. L. A. G. Strong either had nothing ready or were unwilling to contribute. At any rate they are not represented. Nor is Mr. Abercrombie himself, except by the excellent, but disappointingly short, preface, in which he explains the intention of the anthology: namely, "to offer a collection of new poems which may be considered as representative of the art of English poetry to-day," in the hope of giving its readers "a lively sense of contemporary activity."

That the compiler will have succeeded in doing what he has aimed at doing is not improbable. Many casual readers will be surprised to find that even when the Poet Laureate and half-a-dozen of the best known of his contemporaries are left out there can still be forty-six active English poets left; they may be sufficiently impressed by the fact to buy the book instead of a novel (which, by the way, would probably cost them eighteenpence more); and having bought the samples they may go on to buy the books of some of the poets represented. The idea of the miscellany is an excellent one; a drawback to the fulfilment of the idea is obvious; in the case of an anthology chosen from poems already published, the compiler, in writing for permission to reprint, knows what he is asking for; in the case of a miscellany of unpublished poems this is not the case. A polite compiler is in a very awkward position if he asks for an unpublished poem and is sent one which is not up to the author's level of achievement. Is it ungracious to wish that in the case of one or two of his contributors Mr. Abercrombie had been, for once, a little rude?

"LITTLE BURNEY'S" BROTHER

My Friend the Admiral. By G. E. Mainwaring. Routledge. 12s. 6d.

There are some people who are not only interesting themselves, but a cause of interestingness in others. Of these was Dr. Johnson, and of these was Charles Lamb. A man or woman had only got to come once or twice within the circle illuminated by the Doctor or by Elia in order to remain for ever under that beam. Quite ordinary people, quite foolish people, even rather tedious people, underwent a sort of alchemical transmutation and became perennially attractive. How fortunate, then, is the biographer who has for his subject a person who was in himself a point of contact between those two worthies so dissimilar in most ways, so much alike in some! This is already a great deal; but when beyond the dingy windows of Bolt Court or Inner Temple Lane we catch a glimpse of straining sails and waving palm-trees the good fortune seems almost incredible.

It is strange that Fanny Burney's sailor brother should have had to wait so long in semi-obscurity. He was a not inconsiderable figure in his own day, companion of Captain Cook, historian of the South Seas, Fellow of the Royal Society, quite apart from his family and social connections. Mr. Mainwaring has not been able to discover the true inwardness of that inveterate prejudice against him at the Admiralty which delayed his promotion to the rank of Rear Admiral (on the retired list) until within four weeks of his death at the age of seventy-two. It was with an odd prophetic instinct that Dr. Johnson had written many years before, "surely the tale of Tantalus was made for him," but Admiralty or no Admiralty, James Burney's personality was not of the type that is easily disregarded.

The Admiral could have no more painstaking or sympathetic biographer than Mr. G. E. Mainwaring, of the London Library, whose extensive knowledge of naval history stands him in particularly good stead when he deals with the remarkable voyages to the South Seas upon which Burney accompanied Captain Cook. The hitherto unpublished Journals of those voyages are of exceeding interest, not only on account of the new information that they give concerning the last stages of Cook's career, but also for their curious illustrations of life on an eighteenth-century ship in zones both torrid and the reverse. We are told, for instance, that on one occasion Cook succeeded in persuading his men to substitute the milk of coconuts for rum.

> It being represented to them that as we had missed the season to the northward this year, there was great probability of our falling short in that article, in which case it was better to go without it in a warm country than in a cold one.

Mr. Mainwaring publishes for the first time many documents of extraordinary charm, including some letters from the Admiral's wife, the original of Lamb's "old Sarah Battle, now with God," a figure for many years wrongly identified with the essayist's grandmother. There is also a letter from that somewhat shadowy young man, Alexander D'Arblay, Fanny's paragon of a son, whose diction in this missive, written to his cousin on the occasion of the very wedding immortalised by Lamb, would have done credit to Lord Orville himself. Another indistinct person who here moves a little farther into the foreground is the Admiral's son, Martin Burney, "ugliest of men, hugest of eaters, honestest of friends," but upon the mystery of Martin's marriage and the identity of his wife even Mr. Mainwaring's industry has so far failed to throw any new light.

PICTURE-MAKING

The Paintbox, an Introduction to Art. By Martin Armstrong. Black. 2s. 6d.

The Turner Spell. By Bega. Williams and Norgate. 6s.

Mr. Armstrong has written the first elementary book on European art based on the modern point of view. From occasional stylistic resemblance to Mrs. Markham and Miss Loos, it may be assumed that he addresses himself especially to readers of tender age. But besides wishing him well for his courage in introducing Picasso to the nursery, one may recommend him to the grown-ups too. Beginning with the assertion that a picture is above all a matter of form and colour, rather than an imitation of nature or a kind of story-telling, he keeps this as his main theme throughout, and displays the growth of western art as the development in the treatment of those two pictorial elements. He shows how various schools have refined upon them to perfect the portrayal of natural objects and scenery without lessening their predominance, and how the recent movement has cultivated them for themselves alone. In the pages devoted to modern work he finds room for Seurat and pointillism, the cubists and Matisse, thus completing a survey which extends from the Byzantines to the present day.

One could wish for a word on the chiaroscurists, and reference might also have been made to the influence of the Japanese on the post-impressionists and to the new return towards Ingres, but on the whole Mr. Armstrong has used a fine sense of proportion in regard to his limited space. He has pressed his initial motive unflinchingly, persuading his readers to ask of a picture that it should be satisfactory from the point of view of actual painting, rather than to yield to undefined emotional contentment or to put the literary interest of the subject first. On this account he is almost unfair to Raphael's qualities as a painter, but Raphael has for so long been made a medium for mere sentimental beatitude that Mr. Armstrong's strictures are altogether salutary. In any case, he compensates handsomely by advancing the merits of Simone Martini and Cosima Tura, who have a right to be included even in an elementary manual, yet whose inclusion has something revolutionary about it.

There is no doubt that Mr. Armstrong opens up a new field of appreciation to those of the grown-ups who are not yet acquainted with the critical turnover accomplished by Mr. Fry and Mr. Bell. They will see that much of a picture's excellence depends on the way in which a picture is made, and will be less eager to demand only associative pleasure from it. Whether his younger readers will be contented with a pattern instead of a fairy-tale in colour is another matter, while whether the beginning of art was pure ornament or picture-writing is happily a question which they need not try to settle for some time to come.

Bega, who from internal evidence is an elderly gentleman, has not greatly troubled himself with problems of æsthetics either. The beauty of Turner's water-colours descended on him with the suddenness of revelation and impelled him, during the Diamond Jubilee epoch, to copy them one by one in the National Gallery, where they were then housed. The greater part of the book is a detailed account of this act of practical devotion and is a record of little interest for any but the writer. Later, he attempts the analysis of Turner's genius, without accomplishing more than an indiscriminating pæan. His industry and enthusiasm are worthy of respect, but there is no need for him to seek opportunites to censure the present age and all its works with a monotony of commination. It is irrelevant to his subject and convincing only of bad temper. Yet Bega, read in connection with Mr. Armstrong, at least reminds us that the spell of Turner, or any other great painter, is not a thing that can be analysed away into a matter of design and colour only, and that a criticism based too exclusively on the cause misses much of the enjoyment of the effect.

T. W. Earp.

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SERAPH, CAD, OR MAN?

Robert Louis Stevenson. By SIDNEY DARK. Hodder & Stoughton. 12s. 6d.

Stevenson, like Burns or Browning, has been killed by kindness. His name reeks of molasses; like Burns, he was a personality as well as an artist, and one with precisely those qualities that are very apt to call fools into a circle. And he is, to an Englishman, a foreigner, and to many Scots, not what they are accustomed to think of as normal. Just as the three dominant foreign strains in England, the French, German, and Italian, alternate, and each, as it leads, finds the others strange, so in Scotland do England (which means the English Puritans) and France. And Stevenson was by temperament of the French-coloured Scotland, that of James IV, to which Anglophil Scotland, dominant through most of the nineteenth century, was bitterly hostile, if unwillingly dazzled. His place was the country of Dunbar and Alexander Scott, of James IV of the many loves and seven languages, adorer of arts and sciences and splendour, and wearer of the Iron Belt of penance. He was born in the land of Carlyle and Dr. Chalmers, and the French-Scots streak in him is naturally tuned rather to Huguenot France, hard-fighting, fine-mannered, but austere and rather thin—which is not the same thing as shallow. Also, which is less commonly forgotten, but not, I think, much more commonly understood, he was a cripple as well as an exotic. What that compound can do is visible in Byron, who was pure Scot by temperament, and, never knowing it, lived as a man writes who should try to think French in an Italian idiom: the queer bastard falsity of his work in England is that of a man in a mental false position. Stevenson knew himself better, and married better, so that he posed less. Pose he did, certainly: and the more his credit in the circumstances. For a man whose body will founder under him the moment his grip on it slackens, and often in spite of the grip, with always the chance of going down for good—for such a man there are two alternatives. One is perpetual limpness, the other swagger. If he cocks his bonnet a little too flagrantly, *que messieurs les assassins* take his place. As for the charge of egoism, that, in the sense of being always the foreground to his own perceptions, is a little difficult for a man to escape who cannot turn towards a fellow-creature without stubbing his toe on the threshold of his carcase. Also, any of us may die before to-night, but very few of us believe it. Stevenson had to, and for a man with his pleasure in "this sensible warm motion" the knowledge cannot have been amusing. If the gaiety and gallant poise with which he faced it are a little *voulus*, I, at any rate, think no worse of the man, nor of the artist, who after all is merely the man stating in his fashion what is most valid in his experience.

To be sure, allowing for the poison to a man's fame of the weltering tosh of sentimentals (and here one has to allow for it handsomely) it is largely this pose, or poise, that is responsible for Stevenson's current unpopularity. "Distinction" in the old sense of the word, the sense of something braced and complete and balanced that is in his best work, is what more than anything exasperates the blurred machine-made individualism that is our orthodoxy. And the Puritan and the inverted-Puritan alike loathe what is called "charm," which terrifies them and therefore makes them angry. It is for these rather than for his real but rather irrelevant limitations that he is shrilly hated. The Sugary Sentimentals who wallowed and the Sewery Sentimentals who abused have recently made much fuss over his youthful rakeries, as if they were something terribly or gloriously or impossibly out of the common in the son of a respectable engineer. But the Calvinist Conquest of Scotland had left only three possible popular amusements, drink, conversation, and fornication, and although the eighteenth-century Risorgimento made others possible for three-fourths of a century, it passed with Scott, and much of the limitation returned. And young Stevenson seems to have preferred No. 2.

Mr. Dark's very sensible and sympathetic account of the man Stevenson considers the various factors with sanity and a sense of proportion. He has not written the definitive life: we shall have to wait till the next reaction in letters, probably, and it would not surprise me if it came then from France. But the Chocolate Seraph and the Dishwater Cad are giving way to the figure of an attractive and very individual man, with solid faults and equally solid merits. Mr. Dark has the outlines of Stevenson's personality, which in his case, and to-day, is rather an achievement. In dealing with the artist, however—and the artist was a vital part of Stevenson—he is almost negligible. I will not reproach an Englishman for failing to realise Stevenson's place in the line of the old "courtly" writing, but he frankly ignores all the Scottish (that is, in spite of Young Edinburgh, the greater) part of his really substantial work. *Thrawn Janet*, that brilliant little essay in a tradition that goes back to the fourteenth-century *Awntyrs of Arthur*, he can make nothing of—indeed, how could he when he glosses "besom" as "a managing person"? And even in dealing with the rest he shows himself a surprisingly careless reader. The passage quoted from *Pulvis et Umbra* begins, certainly, with the Puritan conception, but even as quoted it strides clear of it, to a position that is very far from the Puritan. And later it is not the feast but the sound of it that "tramples" and "drones"—a rather different matter. None the less, we may be grateful to Mr. Dark for an honest attempt against myth and counter-myth. And he does put his foot on the nonsense of "sedulous apery."

AGNES MURE MACKENZIE.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Problem of Unemployment. By PAUL H. DOUGLAS and AARON DIRECTOR. Allen and Unwin. 15s.

This big book is written mainly for American consumption; but it is a useful survey from the standpoint of English readers as well. Its opening section throws much light on the extent of unemployment in the United States, and on the tendency of the American economic system to lead to a high percentage of unemployment even in prosperous times. There follows a short but competent survey of the extent and causes of unemployment in other countries. A study of seasonal unemployment leads up to a very useful chapter on technological unemployment—an aspect unduly neglected in most books on the general subject. Cyclical fluctuations and their effects on employment are then treated, with a section on State provision of work. There are, finally, long sections dealing with the "placement" of labour and the various systems of unemployment insurance. The book as a whole has no novel theory to put forward, but it is a thorough survey of the general field, comparable in scope with Sir William Beveridge's standard work.

In the Tracks of Montrose. By I. F. GRANT. Maclehose. 7s. 6d.

Miss Grant, who has already made a more serious reputation by her work on the economic and social life of Scotland before the Union, has had the original idea of using the wanderings and campaigns of the great Marquis of Montrose as the motive for several motor tours through Scotland, and then using both to make a diverting and instructive book. How much this book will mean to readers who are completely ignorant of Montrose's exploits it is difficult to say; though her descriptions of Scottish scenery in all seasons and most weathers are unusually vivid, and she tells the story of his various campaigns with verve and considerable understanding. In Scotland, however, most of us take at least a romantic interest in Montrose's adventurous career, and Miss Grant's book should enable his admirers to appreciate his courage and resource, besides encouraging them to follow in the author's wheel-tracks. More serious students should find it valuable, if read in conjunction with John Buchan's *Marquis of Montrose*. Miss Grant includes a full and easily followed analysis of the Marquis's great victory at Kilsyth, complete with a sketch map; and another map shows the wanderings of the author and her companion in pursuit of the shade of Montrose.

The Bank of England from Within. By W. MARSTON ACRES. Printed for the Governor and Company of the Bank of England by the Oxford University Press. 2 vols. 30s.

These two massive, handsome, well-printed and abundantly illustrated volumes, produced regardless of cost and sold at an obviously uneconomic price, remind the reader of the familiar two-volume numerical biography, written by a friend or member of the family, and letting slip nothing to the subject's discredit. There is, indeed, the difference that in this case the subject is not dead, and that no attempt is made to deal with his "public life." The book is largely about the houses the Bank has lived in, built or enlarged, the eternal "domestic problem" of its household servants, its troubles with forgers and enemies both within and without. There are interesting sidelights in its public history here and there; but to relate its history to the financial life of Great Britain is not Mr. Acres' purpose, and he seldom attempts it even by way of digression. The consequence is a very long and for the most part very tedious story of minor happenings, relieved by biographical details about leading personalities connected with the Bank's history; but even these carefully shun any revealing comment upon the bare facts. Indeed, the book is truthfully described as printed *for* the Governor and Company of the Bank; for it is difficult to believe that anyone else will want to read it through, though students of banking history may profitably delve in it for a fact here and there. Above all, it leaves the impression that there is much Mr. Acres might have told, and has not, for not a word in his book really makes us know the inner history of the "Old Lady" a whit better than before.

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